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ABSTRACT

This document contains 11 papers presented at a conference on multicultural issues such as cultural identity, stereotyping, and verbal and nonverbal communication: "Intercultural Communication--An Overview" (Karen Dennien); "Cultural Identity, Communication and Community Relations" (Lyn Trad); "Immigration to Australia" (Mary Woods); "Culturally Appropriate Service Delivery: A Non-Government Service Provider's Perspective" (Claude Hedrick); "If I'm Not Like You, What about Us? (Cooperation and Competition between Ethnically Different Children" (Anne V. Bleus); "Utilizing Co-Nationals as Support Network Members--The Case of Asian Women" (Pauline Meemeduma); "The Rehabilitation Unit for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (TRUSTT): A Response to the Torture Survivor and the Family" (Aidene Urquhart); "Aboriginal Issues" (Alec Illin); "Legal Professionals" [summary only] (Steve Karas); "Cultural Identity: The Representation of 'Australianness'" (Michael Singh); and "Remote and Rural Issues (Margaret Jones, Noni Sipos). (KC)

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ED 367 867

Proceedings of

Intercultural Communications Skills Conference

Sunday 1st July - Tuesday 3rd July 1990

at

Western Residential College
James Cook University
Townsville

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FOREWORD

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS CONFERENCE

The Migrant Resource Centre in Townsville organised an inaugural Intercultural Communications Skills Conference from 1st - 3r July 1990 at the Western Residential College of James Cook University.

A wide range of multicultural issues were covered at the conference such as cultural identity; stereotyping; verbal and non-verbal communication as well as rural and remote issues.

The aims of the conference were:-

- To assist service providers to develop an awareness and skills in working with N.E.S.B. clients
- To raise the level of public awareness in cultural issues
- To improve and generate the level of intercultural communications skills amongst service providers
- To provide a forum for multicultural issues discussion

The Conference was well received by service providers from interstate as well as from various regions of Queensland.

We would like to thank all participants, speakers, the Conference Committee members, Dr. Sue Bandaranaike, Dr. Pauline Memeeduma, Mr Ian Black, Ms Pat Cornford, Miss Marie Gibson, Mrs Pam Caulfield and all other volunteers who had assisted us in the organising of the Conference.

Jessie Yee

Marie Suehrcke

GIA Project Officers

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

SUNDAY, 1st July 1990

1.00 p.m.	Registration
2.00	Opening Speech by Senator Margaret Reynolds
2.30	Keynote Address by Ms Karen Dennien, Assistant Director, Bureau of Ethnic Affairs
3.30	Afternoon tea
4.00	Major Paper - CULTURAL IDENTITY: "Communication and Community Relations" by Ms Sema Varova, Assistant Secretary and Ms Lyn Trad, Regional Co-ordinator, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Canberra and Brisbane
5.00	"IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA" by Ms Mary Woods, Regional Director of Nth Qld, Department of Immigration, Local Goverrntment and Ethnic Affairs
5.30	Minor Paper - CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICE DELIVERY: A NON-GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDER'S PERSPECTIVE by Mr Claude Hedrick, National Centre for Multicultural Studies, Flinders University, South Australia
6.30	B-B-Q

MONDAY, 2nd July 1990

9.00 a.m.	Major Paper - "IF I'M NOT LIKE YOU, WHAT ABOUT US ?" by Dr. Ann Bleus, Psychologist, Townsville General Hospital
10.00	Morning Tea
10.30	Major Paper - "UTILIZING PEOPLE FROM THE SAME ETHNIC COMMUNITY AS HELPERS" by Dr. Pauline Meemeduma, Lecturer, Dept of Behavioural Science, James Cook University, Townsville
11.30	Major Paper - "TORTURE AND THE FAMILY" by Dr. Aidene Urquhart, Head of Dept, Child Psychiatry, Mater Childrens' Hospital, Brisbane
12.30 p.m.	Lunch & Resource Display
1.30	Minor Paper - "ABORIGINAL ISSUES" by Mr Alec

	Illin, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Community Services, Townsville City Council
2.00	Workshops
3.30	Afternoon Tea
4.00	Debriefing
5.00	"LEGAL PROFESSIONALS" by Mr Steve Karas, Senior Member, Immigration Review Tribunal, Brisbane
7.00	Conference Dinner

TUESDAY, 3rd July 1990

9.00 a.m.	Workshops
10.30	Morning Tea
11.00	Major Paper - CULTURAL IDENTITIES - " THE REPRESENTATION OF AUSTRALIANNESS" by Dr. Michael Singh, Lecturer, School of Education, James Cook University
12.00 p.m.	Minor Paper - "REMOTE AND RURAL ISSUES", Ms Margaret Jones, Social Worker, Ayr Community Health Services Ayr, and Mrs Noni Sipos, Ethnic Community Council, Mt Isa
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Workshops
4.00	Afternoon Tea and Close of Conference

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION - AN OVERVIEW

Presented by Ms Karen Dennien,
Assistant Director,
Bureau of Ethnic Affairs, Brisbane.

Distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

I am honoured to have been asked to deliver the keynote address to the first cross cultural communication conference in North Queensland.

Having worked directly in the preparation, design and implementation of intercultural communication training programs across the private and public sectors, I believe I am in a position to share with you some observations I have made.

You will note instantly that I regard myself as a practitioner rather than a theorist in this field and essentially what I intend to do in this keynote address is to focus on the practical aspects of inter or cross-cultural communication. It was a pleasure to have read the outline for this conference and to learn that the organisers had also taken this approach in the preparation of workshops and presentation of papers. Hopefully, this address will introduce the major issues and concepts for discussion and consideration throughout this conference.

To understand intercultural communication, it is essential to have some knowledge of the concepts and theories underlying human communication and culture and then to understand how the two become part of the same process.

As most social research has shown, communication is a universal phenomenon of life. Communication involves or is part of something which we commonly acknowledge as human behaviour. All communication is predicated on the transference of messages between individuals and groups. That is, all communication is interactive. There must be a source and a receiver, messages in order to become behaviour, must convey meaning and must be observed.

Since discovering this Newtonian type principle, we have also stumbled across a few others. We know for example that messages can be transmitted verbally and non-verbally. We also know that behaviour may be expressed through messages, both consciously and unconsciously and that behaviour may be unintentional. The most important principle to recall however is the attribution of meaning to behaviour. Attribution simply is that we use meaning already learnt and apply it to behaviour we observe in our environment. It is usually in this area of communication that we often make mistakes, that is most vulnerable to

misinterpretation.

We should also not forget that communication transpires within and is influenced by physical and social contexts. In relation to physical contexts, we have discovered that matters such as the level of noise, colour of rooms, odour, the presence of vegetation can have a bearing on the type and degree of communication. The effect of social context on communication processes is far more profound. There is an infinite variety of social contexts ranging from; home, the family, work, the gym, the club, school, in which different socially defined rules and patterns of communication exist. Power, authority, age, gender, and social role are important ingredients in defining who, how, what and to whom we communicate.

In summary, if we have not already realised, communication is an "intricate matrix of interacting social acts that occur in a social environment." Communication is dynamic in the sense that we are constantly affected by each others messages which induces perpetual change.

In introducing the concept of culture to you, I am not sure I can be as succint or as grounded as I was in the discussion of communication. The concept of culture is far more abstract and less tangible than communication. It moves as an invisible force shaping our lives. Occasionally it manifests in the form of artefacts and we all become abundantly aware that different cultural forms exist. But apart from that how do we know it really exists?

To commence our reflection on this concept, I would like to tell you what I think culture is not. I believe there has been a tendency to overestimate the impact of culture; to view it in a way that is deterministic and mechanical; that suggests culture is a stagnant and static force which imposes itself on the human condition. Culture portrayed in this sense, gives an illusion that members of a cultural group behave like cultural clones, all synchronised to the prescriptive value frameworks of their particular culture. In this way, we see and hear of people attempting to find and understand, the quintessential Australian, Vietnamese or Chinese values or ethos. My experience has been that from all past and present anthropological literature, no-one has yet been able to explain what are the definitive Vietnamese, Chinese, etc values, attitudes.

To many of you this may seem a rather challenging or surprising position to take, given that you may have come to this conference to learn more about how you can understand your Vietnamese, Chinese and dare I say it, Australian clients or patients. The danger in following cultural prescriptions is that people end up stereotyping how their Chinese, Spanish or Australian clients might behave e.g. a Spanish cultural value might be that husbands do not like to discipline children. (This is entirely fictitious, but if a social worker was counselling a Spanish

family and the husband was disciplining the children, what inferences might the social worker make, if she or he had come to this conference and was told that this was not a widely accepted Spanish practice?)

A second danger or shortcoming of viewing culture in this mechanistic fashion is that it tends to over-emphasize the homogeneity or the uniformity of culture particularly over time. e.g. persons returning to their countries of origin after years of living in Australia are often surprised to find that values, attitudes and ways of life have significantly changed in that country. They are also often described by relatives and friends in their countries of origin as "Australianized". We therefore must accept that culture is a constantly evolving or changing phenomenon and that it is subject to a synthesizing process, called acculturation.

At this point, I feel obliged to share with you what I understand culture to be. I believe "culture" to exist and I define culture as the outcome or product of a collective process by which a group attempts to construct a social reality. A more formal definition, which I believe is close to my own, is proposed by Williams (1983) " culture is a signifying system through which necessarily (though among other means) a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored."

What is the significance of understanding culture in this way? Does it help us to clarify what culture is? In my opinion it does and I would like to explain why. I would like to return to the notion of social reality. Social reality involves all which exists in the minds, the actions and inactions of people. It includes institutions, organisations and the physical products of existence - furniture, houses, spears etc. More importantly, a social reality contains what is projected as the ideal by the group or individuals and what they perceive as the real. It most definitely contains the contradictions that are created between the ideal and the real e.g. a culture may have an ideal value that couples should not engage in sex before marriage. In reality however, this occurs and so a contradiction is created. Over time, change occurs and the ideal loses its meaning or worth. Similarly, it is often not possible to obtain consensus from the group on what the ideal is supposed to be, simply because they and their culture are in such a state of flux that it is impossible to discern the real from the ideal.

Cultures also contain heritage, an understanding of their past and tradition; the present and what might be described as a vision, expectations of the future - all of this in the minds, actions and physical edifices of the individuals who compose the group, albeit in conflicting and competing versions and premutations.

Now that we have gained some appreciation of the complexities

involved in the analysis of culture, I would like to introduce the concept of identity, because it is identity, both the personal and social, which links human communication and culture. Invariably, in the intercultural communication field, the question is always asked - how much of human behaviour is influenced by culture, by personality or by social identity? Can we distinguish between behaviours which are the results of culture, personality or social identity? My response to this question is, what purpose will be served by attempting to isolate these three variables which impact on behaviour? Can these variables be isolated?

Research has shown that all individuals irrespective of which cultures, ethnic or social groups they identify with, are unique - like thumbprints. They are unique in the sense that their perception of reality; the meanings they attach to communications, to values, to social relationships will always be different to the next individual. The concept of personal identity works against the notion that behaviour can be reduced to predictable culturally and or socially prescribed norms. And yet at the same time, we know that culture influences communication through the individual's own internal frame of reference and the attribution process. (Culture influences the meaning we ascribe to certain behaviours).

In a similar way, individuals have what is known as a social identity. Social identity is acquired through an individual's identification with groups in his or her society. Identity therefore may be influenced on the basis of gender, age, occupation, family, religion or social class. Like culture, social identity has the tendency to collectivise the perception and reality of the group.

How then is this knowledge useful to us when we are engaging in communication with a people of different cultural backgrounds? Most importantly, I believe it assists in avoiding seeing people as cultural clones, cemented in time and within an unevolving culture. Secondly, it suggests that in an intercultural communication episode, the factors of personality and social group identification are also valid and significant variables to consider. And finally I think it demonstrates most vividly that all culture systems are valid variations of human experience, irrespective of history or racial origins.

I would like to focus on the intercultural communication process itself and raise the principal issues which are going to be discussed over the next few days. I think we would all agree that intercultural communication encounters are far more complex than the interactions we are likely to have with someone of similar cultural background. I believe it is possible to identify what the barriers might be to effective cross-cultural communication. They are language; non-verbal communication; perceptions and stereotypes; the tendency to evaluate or impose consciously or unconsciously, ethnocentric

attitudes and beliefs: anxiety or stress.

I do not intend to discuss extensively each barrier because I am sure you will have the opportunity to explore these issues in the conference workshops. However they are important to introduce at this stage to commence the reflection and learning process.

Clearly, language or the differences in languages spoken constitute a major and most obvious barrier to communication. However even if a common language is spoken, the role of accent can induce misinterpretation in the communication process. The way in which languages are spoken also introduces certain rules of grammar, syntax and logical presentation which differ across all languages. We often fail to remember that proficiency in a language involves several skills, that is reading, writing, oral and comprehension. A person may be able to understand and speak another language but not have the written or reading skills in the same language. We also know that languages are not directly able to be translated or interpreted from one language to another.

Ethnocentrism is the tendency for people to perceive others from their own cultural viewpoints, whether it be on a conscious or unconscious level. The way we conduct interviews or assess intelligence often contains elements of ethnocentrism, stress and anxiety maybe introduced into the intercultural encounter out of fear, mistrust, or the frustration caused by trying to communicate.

You may be wondering at this point what or how can effective cross-cultural communication be achieved, given that the barriers seem insurmountable. I am convinced that it is possible to improve our communication skills so that we can overcome the cross cultural barriers. I am sure you will agree with me by Tuesday. However I think we can begin the process by referring to some general attributes which are necessary for the effective cross cultural communicator. These are:

1. The ability to constantly reform values, attitudes and beliefs in relation to personal and cultural contexts.

2. A personal motivation hierarchy which is not rigidly or permanently structured.

3. An ability to be secure in one's own cultural reality and to evaluate that cultural reality (that is, its behaviours, values and contradictions) from other cultural viewpoints.

4. An ability to acknowledge and identify the balance in culturally, individually or socially derived behaviour.

Clearly, what I am proposing to you as an effective cross cultural communicator, is not someone who is bound within one or to one culture, but someone who is eclectic, a generalist in

their approach. I am committed to the idea that if we can imbue through training and education a generalist framework for cross cultural communication then people undertaking such training, should be able to communicate effectively in any cross cultural encounter.

I now turn your attention to the issue of cross cultural training, given that this conference has largely been organised to fulfil that objective. The field of intercultural training is not a new endeavour. As a specialist training area, it has its origins in the United States of America, where in the 1960s, it was developed to assist Americans who had joined the Peace Corps to work in Third World countries. Since that time, intercultural communication training has become a valued component of American Human Resource Development Programs e.g. International Business and Company Exchange Programs, Tourism, overseas students entering universities.

In Australia, intercultural communication training has not been integral to corporate or public sector training programs. It has not received any attention or focus under the general human resource development field. In fact it appears to have assumed a peripheral, almost exotic reputation. In Queensland, intrepid equal opportunity practitioners have dabbled cautiously into the area. Social workers, teachers and others who work in the ethnic and overseas student field have championed the cause of intercultural communication training but their activities have mainly been restricted to their respective areas of work.

In my opinion, the need for positive and effective intercultural communication is a natural and logical goal for any society which accepts that it is multicultural, in the sense that its population is culturally and linguistically diverse. Without effective cross cultural communication, time inefficiency, cost increases, productivity losses and consumer or client dissatisfaction are the results. Consider the following:

1. The Bank Loans Officer who spends an inordinate amount of time with a NESB client and then discovers she has unintentionally insulted the client who leaves to find another financial institution to invest the profits of a healthy small business.

2. The hospital staff who in their best efforts to understand the distress of the patient, fail to identify through the lack of cross cultural understanding, the symptoms of the NESB patient. The patient's condition deteriorates as a result of this miscommunication

3. Where the different cultural backgrounds of employees in a section of an organisation creates miscommunication which leads to conflict and the eventual dismissal of valuable workers.

In each of these situations staff and employees may not have encountered these difficulties, had they been exposed to cross cultural training programs. In mentioning training programs, I think it is imperative to point out that there are many different approaches to "training". Some of these approaches are as follows:

1. Information or fact finding. Trainees are provided with factual information about non-familiar customs or cultures.

2. Attribution training. This approach aims to help trainees to explain the behaviour of people "X" from the viewpoint of people in the "Y" culture.

3. Cultural awareness training. The objective of this type of training is to heighten the participant's awareness of their own and other cultures.

4. Experiential learning. This type of training is dependent on the active involvement of participants. It seeks to change attitudes and behaviours and improve cross cultural communication skills. It uses a variety of techniques from role play, simulation exercises to psychological testing and counselling.

5. Interactive training. Trainees are required to meet members of other cultures and spend time in discussion and developing relationships. The assumption is that trainees learn to become comfortable in their interactions with people of different cultures.

From all of the approaches, it has been my experience that the most effective training method, particularly where the durability and the long term effect is desired, is where the emphasis is on attitude and behavioural change. People may well become aware of other cultures and customs, but that may not induce any qualitative change in their ability to communicate effectively.

In conducting conferences of this standard and type, we are not only creating opportunities for our own learning, but we are participating in the wider development of cross cultural training in Queensland and raising its status within the overall human resource development field in Australia. I congratulate the organisers on their initiative and wish everyone an exciting and enjoyable conference

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REFERENCE

Williams R., Culture Fontana, London, 1983

CULTURAL IDENTITY, COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Presented by Ms Lyn Trad,
Regional Co-ordinator,
Office Of Multicultural Affairs, Brisbane

In this presentation, we shall address the following component:

1. What do we understand by culture, cultural identity, and related terms?
2. Cultural identity in a diverse society.
3. Cultural identity in Australia
4. The understanding of culture and cultural identity as a basis for considering cross-cultural communication.
5. Attitudes and stereotypes - their nature and functions.
6. A community relations strategy.

1. CULTURE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

There appear to be some variations in the definition of culture, though these are variations on a core theme.

Essentially, and collectively, these definitions encompass such components as

- beliefs, attitudes and behaviour shared within a particular group
- expectations, goals and values
- the norms by which behaviour is directed and gauged
- language and religion
- customs and symbolism
- family and social structures
- history and heritage
- the arts, cuisine, and other tangible features such as dress
- legal and political institutions

Culture implies the existence of core values and elements with which members of a group identify.

Cultural identity likewise appears to be subject to some variations in definition and interpretation. The implication is that culture is the determining influence on how one constitutes one's sense of identity; the state of knowing oneself and who one is within a broad social framework. Our identity is dependent upon a 'communal identity', and is thus influenced by the values, traditions and prescriptions for behaviour of the community or culture of belonging. Our identity is our concept of ourselves in relation to others.

I should like to refer briefly to other related concepts - ethnicity and ethnic identity: here again there are often varying usages, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Ethnicity is the condition of belonging to a particular ethnic group. (1) I thought it necessary to clarify the definition of "ethnic": according to the World Book Dictionary it means "having to do with ... various ... groups of people and the characteristics, language and customs of each".

Whilst members of an ethnic group share a common culture, it does not necessarily follow that all those who derive from a particular cultural heritage belong to the same ethnic group.

Thus ethnicity refers to the sharing of distinctive characteristics by members of a group.

Ethnic identity implies an image and understanding of self in the context of the ethnic group/the social situation to which one belongs.

The term national identity has also appeared in material used in research for this paper. I prefer to consider it though in terms of identification with nationhood: as such, national identity transcends the bounds of ethnic and cultural identity. All these terms are not mutually exclusive.

2. CULTURAL IDENTITY IN A DIVERSE SOCIETY

Perhaps a brief reminder of the extent of cultural diversity in Australian society is appropriate at this point. It can be summarised thus:-

- the 1986 census [2] revealed that of 16 million inhabitants

  - 1% were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
  - 60% are descended from British and Irish immigrants who came more than two generations ago
  - 5% are descended from NESB immigrants who came more than two generations ago
  - 14% are 1st and 2nd generation Australians of ESB
  - 8% are 2nd generation Australians born of parents of NESB
  - 12% are OS born of NESB

- 40% of the population are immigrants themselves or have at least one immigrant parent
- 20% come from a NESB
- 2% cannot communicate in English
- settlers have come to Australia from over 225 countries
- 7 million Australians can claim three or more ancestries; 4 million Australians have four or more ancestries [3]

Public policy in Australia has evolved over decades in a range of responses to this fact of cultural diversity: the policy of Assimilation which prevailed until the late 1960's can be likened in some ways to the American melting pot theory. The predominant intention was the absorption of minority ethnic groups into the dominant cultural group of the society. The hope was that cultural differences would be lost in favour of assuming the identity of the dominant cultural group. This policy was most evident in relation to Aboriginal communities, and can be seen in its starkest form reflected in former official actions and attitudes towards Aboriginal people throughout Australia. Policies of assimilation did not accord the right of retention of cultural identity to any but the Anglo-Saxon majority in Australia.

The policy of integration filled the intervening

period between assimilationist policies, and the advent of multiculturalism as we now understand it. The Integration policy at least indicated some greater measure of tolerance (if not genuine acceptance) of cultural differences; some of the more outward expressions of cultural heritage became sources of general interest as they had not been previously.

Perhaps that policy was an indication that Australia was advancing towards a level of maturity in which the retention of cultural identity was not viewed (at least as widely or openly as previously) as a threat to the Nation's well-being!

With the evolution of the concept of multiculturalism to the form in which we now know and apply it, the concept of cultural identity assumed a place of central importance. In fact, cultural identity at an official level is identified as one of the three major dimensions of multiculturalism:

> "cultural identity: the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion".(4)

Of the eight goals which form the underlying principles of multiculturalism, these three relate to the cultural identity dimension:

- "All Australians should be able to enjoy the basic right of freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or culture".

- "All Australians should be able to develop and share their cultural heritage".

- "Australian institutions should acknowledge, reflect and respond to the cultural diversity of the Australian community".(5)

These ideals and objectives are contained in the "National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia" launched in July 1989. In this document we find proof that at an official level now in Australia assimilationist policies are a sad part of our political and social history, and rights and responsibilities in relation to the retention and sharing of cultural heritage are spelt out. Thus theoretically, and hopefully increasingly in

practice, the forces in society which have militated against the retention of cultural identity have no legitimate part in the scheme of things.

I should like to make brief reference to the contention still made all too frequently that an acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity in a society such as ours equates with the promotion of divisiveness. Many opponents of multiculturalism - perhaps they include those with assimilationist views - maintain that policies which encourage cultural maintenance and seek to preserve cultural identity create a society riddled by divisions. Such is certainly not the intention of multiculturalism, nor is it the effect.

3. CULTURAL IDENTITY IN AUSTRALIA

Considerations of cultural identity in Australia necessarily lead to deliberations about

- who is an Australian?
- what is a 'real' Australian?
- is there an Australian cultural identity as a singular entity?
- is there an Australian National identity?
- can Australians have dual or multiple cultural identities?
- does Australian society tolerate diverse and multiple identities?

I shall endeavour to address at lease some of these in the next few minutes.

Who is an Australian?

In the words of the Prime Minister on Australia Day 1988,

> "The commitment to Australia is the one thing needful to be a true Australian".

This is now embodied in the first of the eight goals of multiculturalism:

> "All Australians should have a commitment to Australia and share responsibility for furthering our national interests"(6)

Thus at this official level questions of cultural heritage, ethnicity, and cultural identity in our diverse society are not considerations in the definition of "Australian". The implication is that there is a multiplicity of cultural identities amongst those who call themselves Australian.

Notwithstanding this official view, the debate about what constitutes being an Australian in terms of cultural identity is complex and seemingly insoluble.

When asked to define a "real Australian", people frequently respond subjectively, or in terms of stereotypical perceptions.

When I consider what I mean and feel when I call myself an Australian, I think that what that means is that I am of Australian nationality, and derive from an Anglo-Celtic cultural heritage. That was confirmed for me more than 20 years ago when I first went "home" (as my father said at the time) to Scotland; I experienced a sense of cultural identity and belonging in the Gaelic speaking Outer Hebrides of Scotland that I had never experienced in my previous 24 years of growing up in Australia.

Is it true to say that there is not as yet a clear definition of "Australian" in cultural terms; that an Australian cultural identity is not yet a distinct enough entity to enable agreement as to its characteristics? it seems to me that Australian national identity is a more tangible and clearly understood concept than Australian cultural identity. Perhaps, at this point in our cultural evolution, we must be content with that.

Perceptions of Ancestry, and Cultural Identity

According to Charles Price in his Policy Options Paper entitled "Ethnic Groups in Australia", "many third and later generation Australians do not think of themselves as deriving from any particular ethnic group or groups: when asked their ancestry they either give none or else just say "Australian"."(7)

In the 1986 Census question relating to ancestry

- 2.9 million Australians gave their ancestry as "Australian"

- another 1.2 million did not answer, or said their ancestry was mixed or unknown.[8]

According to Price the census reveals the trend that "persons with several ancestries may well decide to give one only, either the one they are in most accord with or the one of which they possess the most".[9]

I recall my own dilemma when completing the ancestry question on the 1986 census form: the answers in relation to my husband and me were straight forward - Lebanese and Anglo-Celtic respectively. When it came to describing the children, my dilemma was considerable -

- according to them, they're Australian

- according to my husband, the children are Lebanese,

but I think in the end I settled for describing them as of Lebanese-Anglo-Celtic ancestry. I remember at the time having some twinges of pity for statisticians analysing too many responses like that!

Aboriginal identity, the pride of Aborigines in their cultural identity, is an important example of group identity in Australia. Some Aborigines in their writing and work have described the value and importance of their Aboriginal identity, and their struggle to maintain it. In the words of Roberta Sykes ...

> "I think the only time there is a danger of losing your Aboriginal identity ..... is if you isolate yourself from your community. Your community generally are your family members. Once you cut yourself off from the almost daily contact with members of your own community, I think then you go through a transition period where in the end you become subsumed into the European society. I think we need to touch base daily, to reinforce our own identity, and

> we reinforce by discussion with other Aboriginal people so that we know that what we are saying and what we are thinking is right, and good not just for ourselves but for the community ... "(10)

Here we see a clear belief that cultural identity is dependent upon, and nurtured and reinforced by communal identity.

Dual/Multiple Cultural Identities

In a culturally diverse society, one in pursuit of the attainment of the ideals and goals of multiculturalism, do we accept that Australians can have dual or multiple cultural identities?

We must be careful to distinguish here between national identity and cultural identity: these are not in this context one and the same thing. I am referring here to people who identify as and are Australian in the national sense, but who derive from one or more specific cultural backgrounds. My belief is that it is possible for individual Australians to integrate more than one cultural identity, and that there is not necessarily any conflict between being Lebanese and being Australian, for example, or in being Australian, of Lebanese and Anglo-Celtic background, where the socialisation experience reflects elements of all those cultural entities.

Unfortunately though, many Australians hold views which are either ignorant or intolerant and are unable to accept that people here can be 'Australian' and have other cultural identifications at the same time. I say ignorant, because many people have such a limited view of their own ancestry that they've never really even thought about the experience and rights of others for whom cultural identity is a vital part of their very existence. And intolerant, because there are some who can't really accept that anyone except white Anglo-Saxon English speaking people who were born in this country is really Australian.

Towards an Australian Cultural Identity - the Concept of Culture in a Multicultural Society

Professor Jerzy Smolicz is one of our foremost academics working on the complex question of an Australian identity, and the definition of the concept of culture in a multicultural society. He

writes of the notion of a shared framework of values within which diversity can flourish. He considers that an over-arching framework which Australians accept, share and with which they increasingly identify, has been evolving. The acceptance of the over-arching core elements he considers as being our indication of an Australian identity.

Elements of Smolicz's over-arching framework of values include

- the English language
- democratic government
- the legal and social welfare systems
- education and economic systems
- folk ways and environment

Those values belong to the public domain of our lives, whilst elements of our individual values and lifestyles form the individual domain of our lives.(11)

Perhaps Smolicz's differentiation between the public and individual domains of our lives and his assertion that they are two distinct levels, is akin to the distinction between national identity and individual cultural identity, and the thesis that they are not mutually exclusive.

4. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND COMMUNICATION

Culture and cultural identity are undoubtedly essential concepts and realities for consideration in relation to communication, and particularly intercultural communication. In our culturally diverse society, the acquisition of skills in communicating across cultural boundaries is seen increasingly as essential. Effective communication skills must be based on the understanding of culture, and of diverse cultural identities.

A logical starting point on the journey towards acquiring sound intercultural communication skills is an understanding of one's own cultural heritage and identity. That, with the skills and capacity for understanding the culture and identity of others, will ensure a greater ability to comprehend

- our responses to others
- their responses to us
- intercultural interaction and communication

Through coming to terms with our own ethnicity, and our system of beliefs and attitudes, we must more easily identify the nature and quality of our perception of those facets in others.

It is heartening to see the steady proliferation of training material in the area of intercultural understanding and communication. Some examples include

- DSS training packages for managers and public contact staff
- material for cross-cultural sensitivity programmes produced by John Gunn, A.C.T.
- Cross Cultural Education and Training Resources Manual, Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission
- material produced by the Multicultural Centre, Sydney CAE
- the Multiculturalism in Conflict Kit - NSW Dept. of TAFE

and so on.

This material places strong emphasis on the necessity for the understanding of culture, cultural identity (of oneself and others), the nature of attitudes, and particularly stereotypes, and recognition of the importance of the development of personal comfort in communicating and working cross-culturally. Whilst some barriers to effective intercultural communication derive from prejudice, the presence of stereotypical attitudes, or plain ignorance, at other times barriers can be seen simply in terms of inexperience, and personal discomfort or perceived personal threat in communication across language and cultural boundaries. With the aid of some of the excellent training material now available, people in the latter category at least may avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue greater personal satisfaction through intercultural communication.

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IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

Presented by Ms Mary Woods,
Regional Manager of North QLD.
Department of Immigration, Local Government & Ethnic Affairs.

My paper unlike others for this conference deals less with the issues underlying our purpose here and more with some of the background - why we are a multicultural society.

Holding this conference on Intercultural Communication skills in Townsville is a reflection of the realisation that in North Queensland there are today people of many different cultural backgrounds. This diversity has existed for at least the last 200 years but unfortunately it has not always been recognised as having positive features. Also, this diversity has not always been as obvious as it has become in recent years; nor had there been the conscious effort that has been emerging to be tolerant of cultural diversity and to share and learn from it.

It would be stating the obvious to say that NQ does not have the opportunity too often to draw together experts, practitioners and students in a gathering with this purpose, who can share experiences, gather information and learn from each other important and practical communication skills which will be disseminated throughout NQ as the participants return to their own areas.

The MRC and its workers may be justifiably proud of providing this forum. It's a credit to them that they have not only recognised the benefits to be obtained from this conference but that they have gathered so many renowned experts.

We are a Nation of Immigrants.

The impact of immigration is profound and far-reaching. All of us have had our lives touched by immigration, some directly, some indirectly. This perhaps explains why most people have a view on the subject.

Australia has handled a sustained population intake from around the globe which has been in very many ways a triumph of tolerance and adaptation - perhaps not entirely perfect but nonetheless remarkable and notable in the world community.

Australia from its earliest days comprised a diversity of cultural backgrounds:

- The Aboriginal and Islander peoples;
- The Immigrants from far away places who ventured here in quest of new lives and who stayed to contribute their energy and talents to a young and growing country;

culture and life-style by the mid 20th century; and,
- The vast flood of newcomers who have made Australia their home in the past 45 years.

But how many settlers are there arriving in Queensland today? And where are they coming from?

The number is about 14% of the annual immigration intake. The country of origin of the majority of settlers changed by the mid 1980's. NZ replaced the UK as the major source country accounting for some 32% of the intake by 1988.

Other major source countries are:

UK 19% Philippines more than 6% Vietnam 3%

The level of interstate migration to Queensland has been consistently high since the 1960's. Over the last 10 years Queensland's gain has averaged about 19000 per year. There is evidence (from census data) to suggest there are a number of migrants who shortly after arrival in another state move to Queensland.

The 1986 census revealed that 15% of the Queensland population were born overseas - by far the lowest for any mainland state or territory. Of the overseas born 48% are from non- English speaking countries - ie 7% of the total Queensland population.

In descending numerical order, they are from Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Yugoslavia and Vietnam.

The number of people of overseas born descent (ie either one or both parents or self born overseas) was 32% of the population.

While the majority of overseas born are concentrated in South East Queensland (more than 19% overseas born), the proportion of overseas born in regional Queensland varies considerably - eg in the main NQ centres it is:

Mackay 12% Townsville nearly 14% Cairns nearly 18% and Mt. Isa 18%.

<u>The migration program</u>

I would like to take time now to look at how many people are coming to Australia as migrants each year and on what basis.

Each year the government sets a migration program that provides for the arrival of a given number of settlers and indicates the anticipated numbers in each part of the program. For the last two years the program was for 140,000 arrivals each year.

- In 1988/89 there were 145316 arrivals
- For 1989/90 it is estimated there will be approximately 131000.

- The Minister announced last Wednesday (27 June 1990) the program for 1990/91 will be 126000.

Most migrants come to Australia under one of three main parts of the migration program;

- Family migration
- Skilled migration
- Humanitarian component

There are two types of family migration - Preferential and Concessional.

Preferential consists mainly of spouses, fiances, unmarried dependent children and parents who have the balance of their family in Australia plus some other dependents.

Concessional includes non-dependent children, parents, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews - all of whom must meet the points test.

Points are awarded for a person's skill, age, relationship to the sponsor, Australia citizenship of the sponsor, capability of the sponsor to provide settlement support, and location of the sponsor in Australia - there are five additional points if the sponsor lives in North Queensland.

In 1990/91 the program provides for 44000 for preferential, and 20000 for concessional; a total of 64000 for family migration.

Within skilled migration applicants will be considered who have special skills that will make an economic contribution to Australia.

The program provides:

- For those nominated by an employer	9000
- For business migrants (those with a successful business background, feasible business plans of potential benefit to Australia and sufficient capital to establish family and business)	10000
- Those with special talent/outstanding abilities eg in sports or the arts	500
- Independent applicants - whose educational skills and ready employability will contribute to the economy - this group are subject to a points test involving skills, age and language	30500
Total	50000
Special eligibility component	1000
The humanitarian component,	11000

In announcing the program the minister Mr Gerry Hand said:

"The new figure of 64000 for family migration is based on trends emerging in the level of demand from concessional family applicants who are of acceptable skill and age levels... The planning level of 50000 for skilled migration has been set in anticipation of a slightly lower demand for skilled labour in 1990/91. It's anticipated that there will be fewer employer nominations and some drop off in the points tested independent category."

The Minister also announced a number of changes affecting the humanitarian component.

"People (in Australia) assessed as being refugees or having strongly based claims on humanitarian grounds will initially be provided with temporary entry permits and not resident status as is now normally the case...

"People holding temporary entry permits with an on-going need for protection will have the opportunity to seek permanent residence after four years subject to places being available under the migration program. If places are not available and there is a need to continue protection they will be able to seek a further temporary entry permit."

"In addition," Mr Hand said, "The government will also provide temporary entry permits on a class basis to any groups it judges in need of humanitarian support by means of special regulations."

Chinese Nationals in Australia on 20 June 1989 will be able to stay for four years under such a special category of temporary residence permit. They will not be required to return to China against their will unless they seriously breach Australian laws. They will be able to apply for permanent residence after the four years and will be considered subject to the availability of places in the migration program.

In the next week cabinet will consider the eligibility of refugees in the temporary resident category for access to benefits and services.

<u>New legislation</u>

Many of you will be aware that since December 1989 there has been a new legislative basis for immigration decision-making - a revised migration act and new migration regulations.

All requirements are set out in the legislation - there for all to see - clients and departmental officers. Applicants are eligible for approval if they meet all the prescribed criteria.

The legislative basis for decision-making also means there is

reduced ministerial discretion. If an applicant is unhappy with a decision, the review regulations prescribe review rights and procedures through the two-tier review system - The Migration Internal Review Office and if required the second independent tier, The Immigration Review Tribunal.

Since the regulations came into effect on 19 December 1989, there have been a number of amendments some technical others in response to community or political recommendations. There is now in Parliament a joint standing committee on migration regulations to examine less clear-cut issues.

Over the next few months we anticipate recommendations by the committee to the Minister regarding these issues - e.g. visitors who marry Australians and wish to remain as residents; and, amendments dealing with illegal entrants.

While we do not anticipate further major changes such as those introduced last December to be made in the near future, there is a degree of flexibility now with the regulations that allows the government through orderly and well considered parlimentary means to make amendments as required.

CONCLUSION

Immigration has always and will continue to a lively issue for all Australians. People are thinking about the future - about the size and composition of our population in ten, or twenty or fifty years from now, about the kind of society we will become.

Some face the future with a degree of trepidation, seeing their personal notions of traditional Australia decaying and vanishing. Others welcome the changes already apparent in contemporary multicultural Australia and eagerly anticipate a continuing evolution.

Whatever personal views individuals hold about Australia's future, whatever governments may decide in the years ahead about the size and shape of immigration programs, it is certain that immigration will continue to play a significant role in shaping our country.

As Australians however we should maintain overriding and unifying commitments to Australia.

Culturally Appropriate Service Delivery: A Non-Government Service Provider's Perspective

Presented by Mr Claude Hedrick.
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Introduction

The argument of this paper will be developed in four stages. In the first I will briefly examine some important aspects of the four main approaches to welfare service delivery that have been utilized over the last twenty years, (along with an even briefer but nonetheless important look at a fundamental difference between the major political parties with respect to the service delivery industry). Secondly, I will highlight what I consider to be some of the major flaws in the various migrant welfare service and settlement models used to date. My third point will be the development of a preliminary list of basic principles for the implementation and delivery of culturally appropriate services. Finally, I will offer a framework within which it should be possible to be more culturally responsible in service delivery.

1. The Four Main Approaches to Migrant Welfare Service Delivery

1A Cultural Deficit Model

The migrant-as-problem service delivery model, or the "*cultural deficit model*" as it is sometimes called, emerged in Australia and many other industrialised countries in the 1960s. Many of the immigrants who were part of the influx of the post war period were seen to be disadvantaged. This disadvantage was usually expressed in the form of an equation which ran something like the following:

Disadvantage = lack of English = ethnicity = urban inner city life = manufacturing industry

From this perspective it is the immigrants'

> unfamiliarity with the institutions and practices of the majority which causes their disadvantage; their linguistic limitations which impede their progress in education, employment and in social life in general. Thus the **cultural deficits** of ethnic minorities became the focus for policy initiatives, which typically approach "the problem" through information programs and language training.[1]

This was an appropriate perspective for Australia in the 1960s with its assimilationist ideology. It enabled contemporary service providers to define "the problem" as being those obvious things - *cultural deficits* - as that which stood in the way of this group of people becoming assimilated (or later integrated) into the mono-lingual and Anglo-Saxon Celtic structures of Australian society. In other words it was a culturally appropriate approach, although only for one culture.

However, even if we ignore the mono-cultural nature of this the *cultural deficit model*, the resulting problem approach to service delivery was fraught with difficulties. Many of the difficulties that were identified such as inner urban city living conditions and conditions in the manufacturing industry were ills that were endemic to the whole of modern industrialised societies, Australia included. These problems were a bottomless pit as far as resource needs were concerned and, indeed, were little understood, and planners of the day found themselves seesawing between trying to tackle the surface and then the deeper problems depending on resources/political expediency.

The problem approach to service delivery also had a devastating and demoralising effect on the people the service was supposed to assist. Not only was there a strong tendency for immigrants to enter Australia at the lower end of the social scale, but *also* being treated as culturally deficient had the effect of making them feel like second-class citizens, twice over. In this context it is not surprising that much of the ethnic press of the day was full of references to themselves as guests or sojourners, i.e. 'outsiders' in this country.

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1 This quotation is from Husband, C., "Community Relations in the 1990s: Old Challenges - New Solutions; A Western European Perspective," The 1988 Charles Pervan Memorial Lecture, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, Perth, W.A., 1988 p 11. The author is actually writing about the situation in Western Europe, but the situation he is describing applies equally well in the Australian setting.

By the mid 1970s there were cries from the wilderness that could no longer be ignored. On the one hand there was a growing body of evidence coming forward from academics and general welfare service providers plus one of the earliest forms of ethno-specific welfare service delivery, the Grant-In Aid Program (G.I.A.) (which had its origins in 1968) and, on the other hand, pleas from increasingly politically aware sets of migrant communities *about the difficulties and hardships migrants were experiencing as distinct from the difficulties Australians were having with migrants.*[2] This situation eventually ushered in a new type of migrant welfare service delivery model which began to emerge towards the end of the 1970s.

1B Migrant-Specific Model

This new form of migrant welfare service delivery evolved in two different contexts: in both the States and Federal Government and in the non-Government sector.

(i) Government Sector

The multiplicity of difficulties and hardships that were articulated by immigrants and general welfare service providers about the immigrant condition provided planners with the opportunity to focus government service delivery for migrants. Under these conditions special `Migrant Units' were set up in government departments, and Ethnic Affairs Commissions (EACs) were established in each State. Their job was to deal with the difficulties and hardships migrants were experiencing. This step was also quite consistent with the assimilationist and integrationalist theories of the day (dying as they were supposed to have been by this time) in a similar fashion to the deficit model approach. It was seen as a temporary step. Once the particular difficulties and hardships migrants were

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2 See Martin, J., *The Migrant Presence: Australian Responses 1947-1977*, George Allen and Unwin, Sydney 1978, pp 27-83, particularly 54-55.

experiencing were solved through this special services approach, the New Australian could then be catered for by the mainstream service.

The establishment of EACs and Migrant Units in government departments was a structural approach (albeit a marginalised or out of sight approach) to solving the difficulties and hardships being experienced by immigrants, but such an approach exposed it to two immediate pressures. The first pressure was a resource one which hit EACs and the Units from two directions. One direction was the immense volume of demands that were made on the service and the other was the resource pressure that came from the departments in which these Units were formed. Many readers will know that these Units were almost invariably staffed with a mere handful of people, in fact are still staffed with a handful of people today, and the EACs were not much better off in terms of staffing. So, given the high level of demand, this approach was immediately in difficulty.

The second pressure which emerged also came from the departments in which these Units and Commissions were located. What were the Units and Commissions for if they were not there to serve anyone with an accent or a foreign sounding name? In other words, the establishment of these Units absolved the rest of the agency - or, in the case of the EACS, the rest of the State Government departments - from working with migrants. It often boiled down to the justification that "migrants looked after migrants."

(ii) **Non-Government**

The non-government approach to "Migrant Unit" welfare service delivery followed a number of important government sponsored initiatives in the late 1970s which were no doubt originally inspired by pressure from the, by now, even more politically aware sets of immigrant communities. One of these initiatives was the formation of the Ethnic Communities Councils (ECCs) and the other initiative of note, grew out of the government report on migrant services known as the Galbally

Report.[3] The formation of the ECCs opened up a channel to governments, both State and Federal, from the immigrant communities themselves. Alongside their more political advisory role, the ECCs were also assisted in developing small-scale ethno-specific services, similar to the G.I.A programmes, if not actual G.I.A grants, which were given to ethnic community organisations.

However, the major service delivery role in this context arose out of a specific set of provisions in the Galbally Report. This Report, among many other things, recommended two interesting developments. One was a role of self-determination for immigrant communities with respect to their own broad needs in cultural and welfare terms, and the other development was the establishment of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) in strategic localities around Australia.[4] These MRCs had a simple brief: information; basic resources to assist the self development of migrant communities; welfare and counselling services where possible and two staff to do all this work! All of which was to be managed by an incorporated body comprising immigrant community elected representatives, and a member from each tier of government, run under a grant from the DIEA, now Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

The cumulative experience of the Migrant Units, EACs, ECCs, and DIEA's, GIA and MRC programmes, led to the development of two more types of immigrant welfare service delivery models.

IC Settlement Stages Service Delivery Model

An outstanding example of this type of service delivery was the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) programme as it grew well beyond its Galbally beginnings. I will not dwell on the details of this development because it can be read in the

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3 Report of the Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants, *Migrants Services and Programs*, (Galbally Report), AGPS, Canberra, 1978.

4 *Ibid.*, pp 64-76, sections 6.2-6.9

Report of the National Migrant Resource Centre Working Party, DILGEA Canberra 1988.

Basically, the Settlement Stages Service Delivery Model focussed, as its title suggests, on the full range of immigrant/refugee needs as they moved through a series of stages in the settlement process. These steps or stages had been identified over a long period of time by academics and service providers as they sought to understand the settlement process.

The MRCs also broke other new ground as the 1980s progressed. Up until the early 1980s, State Governments had been reluctant to accept a great deal of responsibility for immigrants, beyond the Migrant Units in a few of their departments and the EACs themselves, believing that immigrant welfare settlement was primarily and predominantly a Federal Government and, more specifically, the DIEA, now DILGEA, responsibility. MRCs began to convince both State Government and Federal Government departments (i.e. non DILGEA) of the need for these departments to fund migrant service programmes. By the year 1987 some MRCs had managed to multiply their DILGEA base grants up to five times by this process.[5] In other words the Migrant Resource Centre programme was a significant part of the process which began to open up both State and Federal Government departments to migrant welfare service delivery. I should hasten to add that there were other factors at work which were encouraging government departments to move in these directions, such as the development of social justice strategies and access and equity plans.

While the MRC programme shifted in direction, the Migrant Units and the EACs were also on the move in the mid 1980s. Both the client pressure and the resource pressure on the EACs and the Migrant Units had an interesting effect. The EACs and the Migrant Units (both State and Federal) began to adopt a structural solution to tackling their resource problems/pressures and the attitudes of the

5 Working Party, *Report of the National Migrant Resource Centre Working Party*, Canberra, 1988, p 11 and 36.

departments or governments in which they were located. The structural solution they adopted was to turn their attention towards changing the structures in which they were embedded. This was a very fine and an important approach, but it did have the adverse effect of turning them away from direct service delivery. In turn, this placed enormous pressure on programmes like the MRC and Grant-in-Aid.

1D Access and Equity or Mainstream Service Delivery Model

Today we are moving into yet another phase in the migrant service delivery industry: what can be termed the *Access and Equity* or *Mainstream Service Delivery Model*. I am not planning to describe this model because its structure will be well known, instead, I will confine myself to making a couple of what I hope are pertinent comments.

My first comment is that the all-pervasive structural approach to migrant service delivery that this model offers is to be welcomed, as long as it goes beyond simply informing immigrants of their rights in the system and actually works to ensure genuine access and equity. Secondly, I point out that as long ago as the mid to late seventies an important distinction between the Liberal-National coalition and the Labor Party emerged with respect to migrant service delivery.[6] The coalition parties began to favour a residual funding approach to welfare, i.e. a what is left over after everything else type of approach. Whereas the Labor Party showed signs back then that they favoured a permanent institutionalised approach to welfare service provision. The Labor Party has clearly continued to move in this direction - witness the access and equity programme and note that State Labor Parties in power are also moving in this direction. The question is, of course, where is the National-

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6 Graycar, A., "Federalism and Social Welfare," in Jaensch, D., (ed) *The Politics of New Federalism*, Australasian Political Studies Association, Adelaide, 1977, pp. 150-160 following Wilensky, H.L., and Lebeaux, C.N., *Industrial Society and Social Welfare*, 2nd ed., New York, 1965, p. 138.

Liberal Party coalition on this issue today and tomorrow? We need to ask this question as service providers.

2. Major Flaws in the Models

I would like to turn now to discuss what I consider to be fundamental flaws in the service delivery models I have looked at in this paper (yes, the cultural deficit model is still with us). One flaw is that all these models lack a cross-cultural dimension. What is missing is a proper understanding and appreciation (in service delivery input and output terms) of two fundamental parts of the settlement process. The first of these is the emigration-immigration phases of migration and all that is embodied in the movement and settlement of refugees, and the other is the phases of ethnic communal development. A second flaw, allied to the first, is that none of the models (particularly the most recent) has paid proper attention to the development of cultural identity. A third flaw that has emerged is that a huge gap has developed between the *Settlement Stages Model* and the *Mainstream Services Model*, because of DILGEA's focus on the first five years of settlement[7] and the shift by Migrant Units and the EACs towards internal structural change. The other flaw in the models is that there is little or no macro- or micro-level planning.

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7 In the Report of the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policy, *Immigration and Commitment to Australia*, AGPS, Canberra, 1988, it was recommended (Recommendation 11, pp 120-121) that DILGEA focus on the first two years of settlement. Subsequently, the Minister refused to accept this recommendation (see his News Release 8th December 1988) preferring to be "less prescriptive" with respect to a cut-off time point and stating that the focus would be on the "early settlement phase." Notwithstanding this comment, the figure of five years as the focus time-line is in common use today.

2 (1) Lack of a cross-cultural dimension

(a) Emigration-immigration and refugee phases of enforced migration and settlement

Our understanding and appreciation of the emigration phase of the migration process has long been clouded by the theory of economic determinism. In this context the theory says that people migrate for economic reasons: poor economic conditions in the country of origin and better economic conditions in the new country. There is a great deal of substance to this theory, but, I would submit, it is only part of the story. It is my understanding that a great number of people have migrated to Australia not for economic reasons alone, but because it was becoming increasingly difficult (often for economically triggered reasons) to maintain the essentials of their culture in their country of origin, so they migrated to Australia (temporarily, with the intention of returning) in order to avoid losing the essential elements of their cultural identity. Once here they set about developing infrastructures to support their cultural identity for their short-term stay, but for various reasons a return was delayed and the "stop-gap" infrastructures took on a measure of permanency.

I would like to discuss this theory, the subject of a thesis which I am currently writing, at length, but I need to be succinct for the purpose of this paper. At the very least, a simple question and an observation at the Australian end of the process will suggest that my thesis is plausible. Question: Is it reasonable, just, humanitarian to consider that at debarkation people leave their cultural identity behind? In the case of refugees..?[8] This is not a silly question. It has been a very real question in Australia for a long time and the answer was "yes" for a long time! Observation: We do not have to look far to see evidence of quite clear cultural maintenance in Australia today, nor did we have to look far even thirty years ago.

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8 This kind of thinking is labelled the *tabula rasa* myth ie., that the " immigrant has wiped out the old and is ready to be fully socialized and assimilated to the new." See Jackson, J.A., (ed) *Migration*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp 2-3.

So why don't we approach service delivery with the idea (strong possibility) that these people, this person, want to maintain their/her/his cultural identity? Once we take this simple step in a deliberate sense, we are well on the way towards providing culturally appropriate service!

If we have made such fundamental errors in the past about people's intentions, then we need to re-examine what we understand about the emigration-immigration process (and the special case of refugee migration) and take proper account of the cross-cultural dimension, in order to be able to provide culturally appropriate service. In this context, it is interesting to note that a great deal has been written about the emigration-immigration process and theories abound, which in itself suggests that we are a long way from full understanding.[9]

(b) **Phases of Ethnic Communal Development**

I am quite convinced that we do not understand nor fully appreciate all the dynamics and phases of ethnic communal development in Australia, or if we do, we certainly do not apply it to our service delivery methodology.

Two examples will illustrate this point. Early in the 1960s Michael Tsounis in his Ph.D. on Greek communal development in Australia demonstrated that for that community group at least, structured communal development did not take place until a critical number of people could come together.[10] In this case it was about 400 people living in reasonable proximity to each other.

How much understanding of ethnic communal development and the need for it have we demonstrated, when it is next to impossible to get funding from any source to assist very small or scattered groups?

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9 The most recent treatments of the literature on this subject are to be found in Cox, D.R., *Migration and Welfare: An Australian Perspective*, Prentice Hall, 1987, especially pp 7-77 and Cox, D.R., *Welfare Practice in a Multicultural Society*, Prentice Hall, 1989, pp 8-131.

10 Tsounis, M., "Greek Communities in Australia," in Price, C.A., (ed) *Greeks in Australia*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1975., pp 29-30.

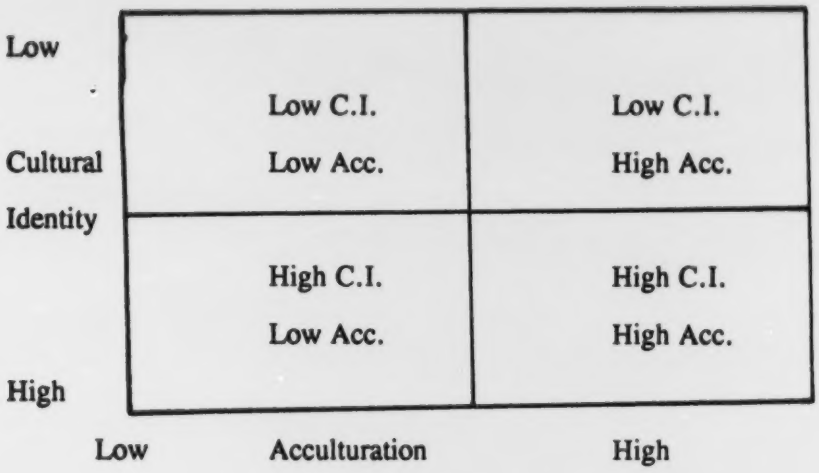
Resource and/or politically sensitive questions aside, until this anomaly is sorted out we are not providing culturally appropriate service in ways which are consonant with ethnic communal development, its difficulties *or the need to offer an alternative to overcome or reduce the traumas of migration or refugee movement.* This latter comment is the critical issue in this context.

The second and last example under this heading is the following. I have watched a large number of grant-in-aid programs start up for new arrivals and I was involved in the process, so I include myself as part of the problem that I am about the describe. Almost without exception two things happened. In the first place the foundation worker burnt out very rapidly and secondly, the community-based management committee got into difficulties. (Are there other readers who have had a similar experience?) Clearly, there was a lack of understanding by all concerned of all the ramifications of providing a community-based service for a newly arrived group. This situation also needs to be understood and resources addressed before we can say we offer culturally appropriate service.

2 (2) Failure to assist the development of cultural identity

The Galbally Report provided the grounds for the first serious attempt to actively assist the process of maintaining cultural identity by supporting the principle of self-determination of ethnic community groups. However, the principle was rarely translated into positive practice (for example in the form of direct training assistance), beyond the token approach of giving groups small grants to assist the development of their organisation or an aspect of a group's culture. such as its art.

The most serious example of this flaw is to be found in the newest model of migrant welfare service delivery, that of the *Access and Equity* or *Mainstream Service Delivery Model.* The following matrix will help to illustrate this point.



This matrix depicts the four different situations that occur when high to low cultural identity is graphed against low to high acculturation. In the context of today's official government policy of multiculturalism, the position that we should aspire to is the combination of high acculturation and high cultural identity. What has not been spelt out as clearly, if at all, is the important corollary position, that of active avoidance of the opposite position, low acculturation and low cultural identity. Until this corollary position is addressed then we are not providing culturally appropriate service delivery, either for the "old" or the "new" culture.

2 (3) The emerging service delivery gap

We should all be very concerned about the gap that is developing between the *Settlement Stages Service Delivery Model* embodied in programmes like the MRCs and the new *Access and Equity* or *Mainstream Service Delivery Model*, because of DILGEA's projected shift to a focus on the first five years of settlement and the structural change focus of EACs and Migrant Units. The gap is even more serious when it is remembered that the MRC and GIA programmes are base-funded by DILGEA.

What is going to fill the gap? The new *Access and Equity* or *Mainstream Service Delivery Model?* I would like to think that there was a very real hope that the new model will fill the gap, but my experience of the vicissitudes of State and

Federal politics and planning, and the relationship between the two forms of government, suggests that the new model will not have a significant and lasting effect on the gap, at least in the foreseeable future. Indeed, there is evidence to show that there are moves generated by this model to slip into this gap (for example, recent grants being offered by the Department for Community Services and Health), but there has been no public announcement of an overall plan or of discussions with other interested parties, which leads into my next point.

2 (4) Lack of micro- or macro- level planning

There has been very little micro-level or macro-level planning in this country for the delivery of migrant services. Furthermore, attempts to develop such planning have been frustrated by a complex interplay of situations that can all be subsumed under the heading *demarcation disputes*. The most obvious of these "disputes" is the one that exists between the State and Federal Governments, with the states declaring that migrant welfare and settlement is primarily the responsibility of the Federal Government. (This attitude does appear to be changing, but there are no signs that it is a change based on negotiation.) Less obvious "disputes", but nonetheless very important ones, are those created by the multiplicity of different boundaries that are drawn by Local Governments, and Federal and State Government departments. All of these latter "disputes" are further compounded by the fact that there are varying degrees of autonomy vested within each of these different boundaries, making joint decisions about a common issue almost an impossible process. Finally, this whole situation becomes even more problematic when the dimension of political differences between State and Federal Governments enters the arena of micro- or macro-level planning on just about any issue, let alone migrant welfare and settlement.

The only glimmer of hope that I see on the horizon that counters the criticism of a lack of planning is the development of State Settlement Plans that have been initiated by the South Australian office of DILGEA and, I believe, taken

up nationally by DILGEA. However, these Plans do not appear to have progressed beyond a cautious description of services currently on the ground.

It is perhaps timely, then, for someone outside of the government system to offer a framework for culturally appropriate service delivery from a service provider's perspective, in order to ensure at least a potential forum for informed debate as initiatives like the State Settlement Plans are released for broader community discussion than has hitherto been the case in this instance.

As a prelude to the introduction of a framework for culturally appropriate service delivery, I would like to offer a preliminary list of basic principles for such a framework.

3. Some Basic Principles for Culturally Appropriate Welfare Service Delivery

It is emphasised that the following list is only a beginning and is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it is offered in order to deliberately encourage debate. Most of the principles enunciated below logically follow points made earlier in this paper and require no further comment in this context, others will be elaborated upon as required.

Migrant welfare service delivery will:

1. *Address the difficulties and hardships immigrants and refugees face in their settlement into all aspects of Australian society.*
2. *Continue to be addressed in structural change terms (i.e. in social justice and access and equity terms from within State and Federal Government departments) by such instruments as embodied in Migrant Units and Ethnic Affairs Commissions, in addition to access and equity plans for all government departments.*

Comment: This dual approach to access and equity should be maintained as an important monitoring device - with appropriate powers for the internal watchdogs - given that policy at this level of complexity is very difficult to monitor from outside of the system, for example, by the interested public!

3. *Continue to be offered in a substantive manner by community-based organisations, such as MRCs and ECCs, in addition to such services as are offered from within government departments.*

Comment: Two very good reasons for the maintenance of this dual service delivery approach are choice for the client and, in the case of the community-based outlet, a means whereby the needs of the client can be monitored more closely or appropriately.

4. *Be offered in both the government and non-government sectors such that neither form of service delivery is marginalised in terms of resources, staff, staff conditions and structures (i.e. they are both treated as mainstream).*

Comment: A great number of debilitating inequalities exist in the current arrangements with respect to these issues. In the prevailing polarised climate, of mainstream = government vs ethno-specific or migrant-general = non-government, and special sections of government, people working in the migrant field, particularly in the non-government sector, are potentially disadvantaged on a number of levels by differences between the two approaches. Salaries, staff levels, career pathways and appointment security are just a few instances of areas of potential disadvantage. In turn these differences can lead to questions of the professional competence either of the person concerned or of the service being offered.

5. *Be planned, developed, implemented and resourced on the basis of a definition of settlement that recognises that settlement is an whole of life experience, yet may transcend generations, and that individuals may move in and out of settlement through their life span.*

Comment: Field work experience validates this principle, but in the light of the position currently taken by DILGEA, this fact needs to be reiterated so that it is not lost in the ensuing debate on who is responsible for what, when it comes to immigrant and refugee welfare.

6. *Be supported by continuous empirical research into the emigration-immigration phases for immigrants and refugees, ethnic communal development and the development of cultural identity.*

7. *Be planned, developed and implemented with respect for the choice of maintenance, or, to put it more positively, the development of cultural identity.*

8. *Include training or staff development components wherever possible to cover such areas as organisational development, cultural development and personal professional development.*

Comment: The training or staff development programmes suggested here should become an integral part of as much migrant and refugee welfare service delivery as possible in order to assist the desired outcome of high acculturation and high cultural identity

9. *Be planned at the macro-level and subsequently at the micro-level by appropriately selected and empowered bodies.*

Comment: The best starting model for this type of planning that I have encountered is that utilised by the Ethnic Aged Working Party, *Strategies for Change: Report of the Ethnic Aged Working Party*, AGPS Canberra, 1985 for the Department of Community Services.

4. A Framework for Culturally Appropriate Migrant Welfare Service Delivery[11]

The core of my suggested framework for culturally appropriate migrant and refugee welfare settlement and service delivery consists of addressing three sets of needs and their interactions. The three sets of needs are delineated as sets of skills - survival, interactional (problem solving, personal growth and development) and cultural growth - that need to be developed to assist the process of high acculturation and high cultural identity. A preliminary list of each set of these skills would include the following.

Survival Skills

English language
Employment
Housing
Education (Self and Children)
Health
Finances
Information

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11 See Cox, D.R., *Migration and Welfare: op cit.*, pp 103-148 for a different and far more systematic approach towards developing a comprehensive policy on immigrant welfare.

Interactional Skills

Isolated Women
Isolated Men
Families (Nuclear and Extended)
Children
Adolescents
Aged

Cultural Growth Skills

Emigration/Flight-Immigration
Religion
Family
Extended Family and Kin
Language
Communal Development

I am fairly certain that practitioners in the field will immediately recognise each needs-based item, the three sets under which I list these items and the importance of interaction, because they represent a work-a-day reality, which is a good rule-of-thumb test for the potential validity of the framework I am offering. I am also hopeful that there is immediate acceptance of my use of the word "skill" in the context of a framework for a welfare service delivery model: "skill" or the implied "skill development" is a much more positive approach to welfare service than the normal connotations of such service, that of handout. This approach is also consonant with recent trends in the labour market of moving away from the unemployment benefit towards training or retraining.

Before moving onto the next stage of the full development of this framework, each item in these lists would need to be carefully examined and defined within the limits of our current knowledge and understanding and any outstanding omissions rectified, particularly those items in the lists which vary according to the stage(s) of migrant and refugee settlement, but this detailed analysis will not be carried out here. Rather, I will move on and develop the main outline of the proposed framework.

The next step in the process of developing the framework is to detail the range of interactions between both the sets of skills and individual items within the sets. Once this process is completed, both pictures of needs-based skills can be

brought together and the resulting product will provide the ground plan that needs to be addressed.

Addressing the ground plan requires the integration of the results of two more processes. One of these processes is to look at the strategies required to develop the needs-based skills and the other is to determine who is providing the appropriate service. The resulting integration of these two processes will provide a firm basis for both macro- and micro-level planning, such that the planning can then be applied to various regions or even down to a specific group within a specific region.

A summary chart for the framework is as follows.

Survival Skills

English language
Employment
Housing
Education (Self and Children)
Health
Finances
Information

Interactional Skills

Isolated Women
Isolated Men
Families (Nuclear and Extended)
Children
Adolescents
Aged

Cultural Growth Skills

Emigration/Flight-Immigration
Religion
Family
Extended Family and Kin
Language
Communal Development

Step 1. Carefully define each item in the list so that all the elements of that need are exposed as a need-skill, paying particular attention to variations in the need that are determined by the stages of settlement, and migrant as distinct from refugee settlement. And, of course, add to the list where required.

Step 2. Develop a picture of the actual or potential interactions between each item in each set and across the sets, in order to maximise the value of intervention strategies. Add the results of this picture to Step 1.

Step 3. Develop a set of strategies that will address the needs-based skills and, finally, determine who and what is providing or not providing the appropriate service.

Step 4. Implement the framework for culturally appropriate welfare service delivery. Bear in mind that focussing on particular groups will require appropriate modifications to the ground plan.

I am not going to pretend that the development of this proposed framework will be a simple task. But something along these or similar lines, or even radically different lines, does need to be attempted in this country if we are serious about both meeting the needs of our newcomers *and* implementing our multicultural policy.

IF I'M NOT LIKE YOU, WHAT ABOUT US?
(Co-operation and competition
between ethnically different children)

Presented by Dr. Anne V. Bleus
Townsville General Hospital,
Townsville.

This paper reports on research conducted with children of a range of ages from early childhood to adolescence, which was conducted in Australia and South-East Asia.

Children of similar age were randomly placed into ethnically similar or ethnically mixed groups.

All groups were asked to co-operate and compete with each other on a culturally appropriate game, to earn rewards of their choice. Measurements of interactive behaviour were taken, using video-recordings.

The results suggested that children of each culture studied used similar behavioural patterns when co-operating and competing, even though their culture of origin affected the degree to which specific behaviours of the repertoire were emphasised.

When children interacted in mixed-ethnic groups, patterns of interaction were often more harmonious than when they interacted with members of their own ethnic group, though the numerical composition of the group also affected overall behaviour levels.

Behaviour patterns also changed with age, although these changes were quite consistent for children from each of the different ethnic groups.

The implications of the findings for the Australian multi-cultural context are discussed.

Since the days of the First Fleet, Australia has been a multi-cultural society, and it has remained so ever since. Enthusiasm for immigration may have waxed and waned at times over the two centuries since, because of various economic and political factors. However, in recent years, the numbers and origins of ethnic groups resident in this country have increased markedly.

For example, it has been estimated that in 1976 only sixteen percent of the Australia population under the age of nineteen years had mothers born in non-English speaking countries, and these mothers came from thirty eight different areas. (Schools Commission report for the triannium 1979-1981) and more recent statistics suggest that the cultural and racial mix of this country has increased even further, both in numbers of immigrants and in diversity of countries and cultures of origin.

Research has been conducted for many years on the nature of inter-racial and inter-cultural interaction. However, for a number of reasons we do not yet have a consistent picture of the nature and effects of culture contact. So although most of us here, to-day, would be convinced of the humanitarian or the justification for these changes, we know less than we possibly should about the objective realities of the inter-cultural experience.

All of us, I am sure, have stories to tell, good and bad, about the personal aspects of the multi-ethnic experience. But how typical are our experiences, and why do they occur? The role of cross-cultural research is to find out. Only then, can we deal with the issue of inter-cultural communication in an objective and rational way and make decisions about immigration which will truly benefit all concerned.

This paper reports on research into co-operative and competitive behaviour amongst groups of children who were either culturally different, racially different, or both.

The research concentrated on what happens in **Face to Face** interaction between ethnically or culturally different children. This is because of my belief that what happens in everyday experience has more impact on most Australian residents than the more remote political and/or economic decisions which decide who comes to live in this country and under what conditions. Those who come here have to live with the experience, and to adjust to life here. Is that easy or hard? When is it easier, what makes it harder? How do those who lived here before adjust to the migrant presence? These are some of the issues cross-cultural psychological research can address.

The research reported here focused on the behaviour of children across a range of ages. It attempted to find out what happened when children who were different to one another had to work

together, face to face. Was the experience of working with someone different to oneself likely to lead to co-operation, or to conflict? Were there any consistent trends in inter-ethnic interaction, which could be expected to generalise to other situations outside of classrooms? Was cultural difference the only factor regulating face to face interaction, or was simply looking different to others enough to cause changes in interpersonal behaviour? To address some of these issues quite a large cross-cultural study was required. Half of the research was conducted in Australia, with children who were racially different, but very similar in behaviour. The other half was conducted in Malaysia, to test out the generality of the findings in other settings, and to find out whether having a different cultural background, in addition to looking different to others, changed the quality of interpersonal interaction.

The Australian part of the research was conducted in Darwin As many of you will know, Darwin is now and always has been one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Australia. For example, even during the years of the 'White Australia Policy, which restricted immigrants of non-Caucasian background to this country, there lived in Darwin a great number of Australians of Chinese racial origin, whose descendents had come here in the mid-1800's to work in the gold fields. The decendents of those people still live there, and although 'Australian' in every important way, they still look Chinese. So the children of this group, whom we shall call the 'Darwin Chinese',. are certainly different from Caucasian-Australians racially, but after a century and a half, the cultural differences do not seem to be great. (Of course, there are many other people of Chinese origin in Darwin as well, such as recent immigrants from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, and Vietnamese Chinese refugees. But because the study was of children who were physically different only, these people were not included in the study. All the children studied had to be Australian-born of Australian-born parents. Many were fifth or sixth generation Australian).

So, a determined effort was made, with the help of the Northern Territory Department of Education, and all the schools in Darwin, to identify all the school-aged Darwin Chinese kids in town. We believe we found just about all of them. Then they were matched up with Caucasian-Australian kids of the same age and sex.

So how do the Darwin-Chinese relate to other Australians? Does simply looking different matter? And if it does, what effect does it have - good or bad - on relationships with others? And is that effect different for kids of different ages?

For a number of reasons, (some of which I detailed in an earlier paper for this conference), I was very interested in the power relationships between ethnically-different children. And further, I was interested in the way these power relationships affected the way children co-operated and competed.

However, before we could begin to investigate the research questions, it was necessary to develop a task on which children could work together and on which they could either co-operate or compete. What's more, the task needed to be appropriate to children who were of either Asian or Caucasian background, so that everyone would respond to it with a reasonable degree of enthusiasm. And it also needed to be fun.

After a lot of experimentation, a task was finally developed which seemed to meet all these criteria. It was adapted from a commercially available toy (The 'Humpalump Game' Waddingtons House of Toys), but the toy was modified by mounting on a tilting board with a swivel base, so the kids themselves could influence the outcome for their own or for group ends. The specific details have been published (Bleus, in press), and, of course, I am happy to provide further specific details to anyone interested. The game, which could be manipulated to allow children to either co-operate or to compete, for rewards they chose, (either money or sweets), is illustrated in Figure One.

The game required the children to roll a marble down a groove in the 'Humpalump's' back, until it came to rest against a particular child's slot, at which time they could put a 'leg' in place. Of course, children could help the process along, by tilting, rotating or otherwise manipulating the apparatus.

By video-recording children's behaviours as they worked on the game in groups of three, it was possible to work out the dominance, or power relationships amongst them, and to estimate the outcomes of these relationships for individuals and the group as a whole.

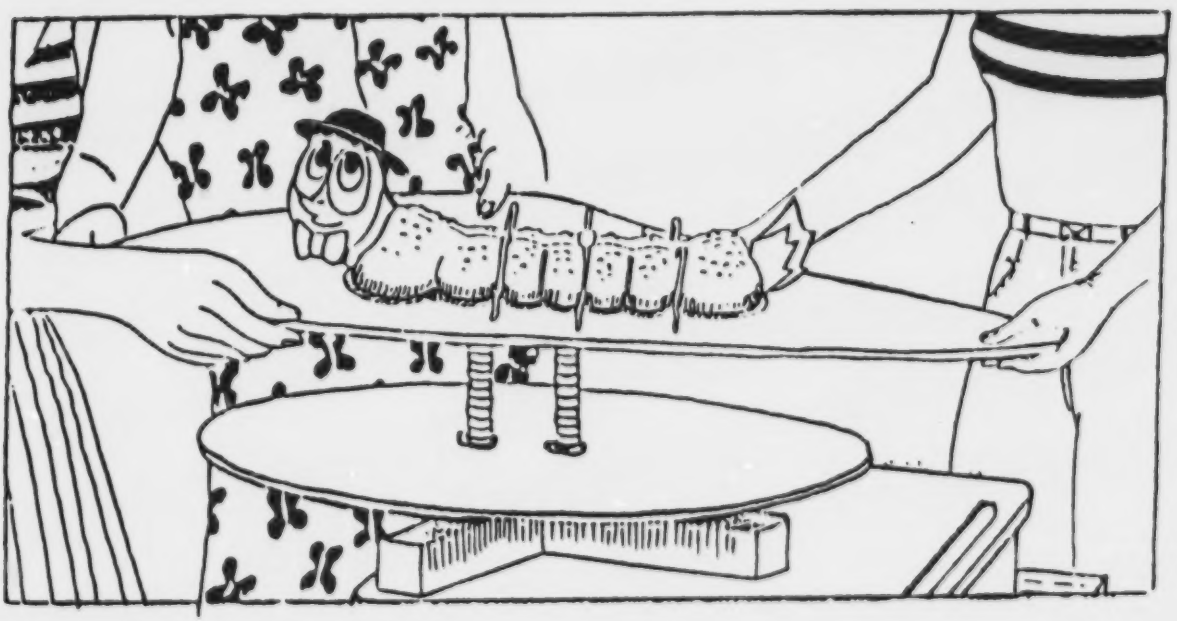


FIGURE ONE - The Humpalump toy, as modified for use in these studies.

Children of either ethnic group (Caucasian or Chinese-Australian), were then randomly assigned to either ethnically similar numerical-majority or numerical-minority groups. There were three children in each group. So there were four ethnic groups overall (all-Chinese, Chinese majority, Caucasian majority, all-Caucasian) in each age group. The procedure was repeated for pre-school children, children in middle primary school (grades 3 - 4) and children in upper primary school (grade 6 - 7), and for boys and girls, resulting in a total of 321 children being tested (170 Caucasian and 151 Darwin-Chinese).

Once the Darwin study had been completed, the research was repeated in Malaysia. This time, with the help of a number of Malaysian colleagues, we studied the interactive behaviour of children who were Malay or Malaysian-Chinese, again either in same-ethnicity or mixed ethnicity groups. Again we tested boys and girls in the same age ranges as Australia. In Malaysia, we tested 504 children (231 Chinese and 273 Malays). Despite a few minor modifications to the size of the game board etc. (because Malaysian children are smaller than those in Australia), and to the rewards offered (because one cannot offer money in Malaysia, lest this is seen as encouraging islamic children to gamble), the research strategy, and the equipment used were the same. Again, all behaviour was video-taped, for later statistical analysis of the dominance relationships between these children. (The variables measured are presented in Appendix One).

Each group of children completed five trials of co-operation and five of competition. On the co-operative task, children were instructed to place all their legs on the "Humpalump" within two minutes, in any order they chose for each to receive a reward. Provided that they were prepared to work together, even the smallest children were able to do this. On the competitive task, however, the children were told that the first child to get his leg in place would receive two units of the reward, the second child would receive one unit, and the third child would miss out altogether. And since children had chosen their own rewards, and none wanted to miss out, this resulted in some very interesting interaction indeed. No time limit was placed on competitive interaction.

With the help of the video-recordings, we were able to measure six categories of behaviour in both settings. These were non-verbal and verbal dominance behaviours, behaviours resulting from the physical handling of the Humpalump apparatus, spontaneous group-generated behaviour (e.g. making up rules about taking turns), times scores to complete the task and rewards chosen.

So what were the results? The first thing to note is that what happened in the two countries was **similar** in a number of important ways despite the clear cultural differences between the Malaysian and Australian children, and despite the fact that Malaysian children were both culturally and physically different, whereas Australian children were not. (Those interested in the details of statistical analyses etc. will find them in the Appendix). And the similarities were in dominance behaviours in each country, children appeared to be primarily concerned with

co-operative behaviour in peer group interaction and maintained co-operation through dominance. And this interest in co-operation applied in both mixed-ethnicity and same-ethnicity groups in both countries. Competition was a secondary strategy, used by children when all else failed.

So one important research question was immediately answered. If we remember that this tendency for co-operation to prevail occurred in both same-ethnicity and mixed-ethnicity groups, it seems clear that inter-ethnic interaction does not automatically lead to conflict. Rather, getting on co-operatively with others, no matter whom they are, seems to be preferred by all parties. And if we remember that this process occurred in both countries, despite their very different cultures, we can conclude that this tendency is not specific to Australian children, but also occurs in others with quite different upbringing. This suggests that a very basic human tendency is involved.

Now, although children of each country and culture preferred co-operation to competition and although all children used dominance behaviours to achieve this, nevertheless there were some differences in the interactive styles they used. As shown in Table one (below), Australian children tended to use more verbal strategies, and more overt non-verbal strategies. Malaysian children, on the other hand, tended to be much more subtle in their interactions. They used very high levels of subtle non-verbal behaviours, such as eye contact and giggling, to regulate what was happening in their groups. This tends to suggest that although dominance is a very basic human activity used by children in different cultures to regulate inter-personal interaction, nevertheless, the specific strategies used were influenced by the child's culture. (Interestingly, the Darwin-Chinese children behaved just like the Caucasian-Australian children, and not at all like the Malaysian-Chinese, suggesting that culture, rather than race was the important variable in the differences I have just described).

VARIABLE	TASK	F VALUE	D.F.	PROB-ABILITY	MALAYSIAN MEAN	AUSTRALIAN MEAN	DIRECTION OF DIFFERENCE
Criticisms	coop	164.84	1,198	.000	0.62	3.67	*
	comp	112.57	1,196	.000	1.75	9.32	*
Arguments	coop	36.56	1,198	.000	0.37	1.11	*
	comp	6.04	1,196	.014	1.91	3.36	*
Orders	coop	98.54	1,198	.000	4.93	12.94	*
	comp	65.44	1,196	.000	5.63	13.64	*
Board contest	coop	62.11	1,199	.000	0.50	3.47	*
	comp	42.98	1,196	.000	1.16	5.80	*
Physical threat	coop	4.77	1,199	.03	0.14	0.21	*
	comp	16.99	1,196	.000	0.13	0.41	*
Physical attack	coop	8.47	1,199	.004	0.08	0.14	*
	comp	21.98	1,196	.000	0.11	0.53	*
Board struggles	coop	0.35	1,199	n.s.	4.83	3.93	-
	comp	0.70	1,196	n.s.	9.54	13.06	-
Marble contest	coop	1.64	1,199	n.s.	4.57	4.68	-
	comp	2.28	1,197	n.s.	4.61	3.42	-
Attentional focus	coop	164.61	1,199	.000	22.99	0.33	**
	comp	198.21	1,197	.000	35.84	0.89	**
Smiling	coop	120.04	1,199	.000	34.19	6.48	**
	comp	47.03	1,197	.000	38.18	9.18	**
Offers	coop	97.89	1,199	.000	6.75	1.12	**
	comp	81.49	1,197	.000	8.68	1.36	**

Code: * Australian mean greater ** Malaysian mean greater

Table One: Differences between children from Australia and Malaysia in use of separate dominance behaviours, when cooperating and competing.

So can we claim, then, that Malaysians were more co-operative or competitive than Australians, or vice versa, as some researchers have previously tried to claim? No, we can't.

The reason is that children from the two countries used very similar overall levels of behaviour. There were simply differences in emphasis. The implication is that children, no matter where they come from are just as prone to use dominance behaviour to ensure co-operation (and, when necessary, competition) amongst group members, even though the culture they come from may have taught them to prefer certain strategies above others.

So dominance behaviour would seem to be an important way of regulating behaviour in children's groups. And that rule would seem to apply when they are interacting with children who are different as much as when with children who are the same as themselves. Then, are there any important differences when children from a particular culture interact with children similar to themselves, to when they relate to physically or to culturally different others? Is co-operation enhanced or does it decline? Do they become more or less competitive? Another set of statistical analyses addressed this issue.

By comparing the frequency of dominance behaviour in same-ethnicity and mixed-ethnicity groups in each country, it became clear that the proportions of minority group children in the group made a great deal of difference.

When children who differed from the mainstream group (e.g. Darwin-Chinese) were in the minority in a group, interaction became even more co-operative and harmonious than when members of either group related to their own kind. It was as if all children would back off a little under these circumstances. And this was so in both countries, despite the cultural differences.

Yet when children who differed from the mainstream group were in the numerical majority, far from backing off, all concerned became even more dominant and assertive, and relationships were less harmonious as a result. It was as if being out-numbered served as a challenge to mainstream children, who, perhaps fearing a 'take-over', responded accordingly. Some of these patterns of interaction are illustrated below.

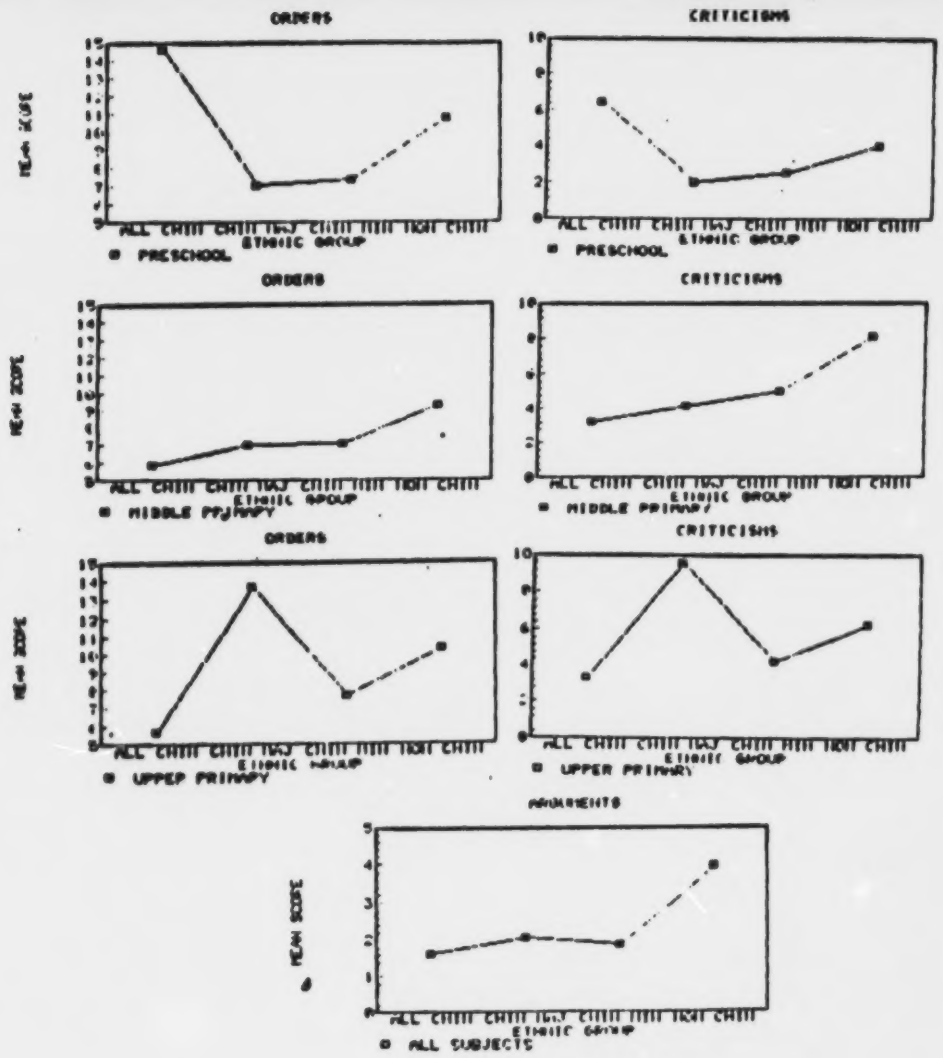


FIGURE TWO: Significant effects attributable to ethnicity on verbal competition for the combined sample.

If we remember that these are very basic human processes, applicable to people regardless of race and culture, is there an important principle here? The findings would seem to suggest that the numbers of culturally different children in any setting would appear to be critical to harmony in the group as a whole. Small numbers promote cohesion and co-operation. Large numbers may lead to conflict.

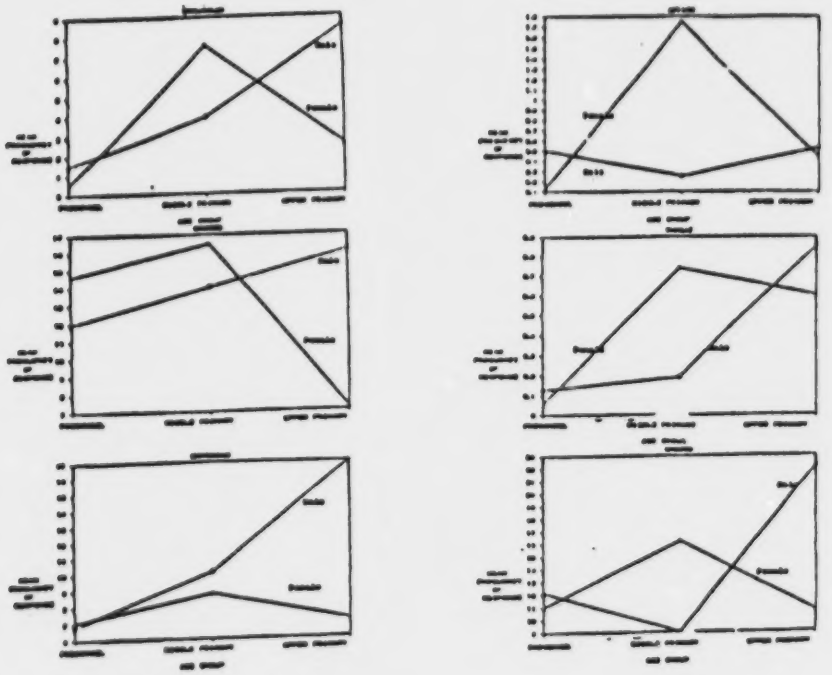
Now, of course, we need to be aware that this research was of children. And, as we all know, children change developmentally and are not necessarily like adults in the least. So before we go drawing any conclusions from this research about the general multi-cultural context of this country, we should look to see whether these tendencies changed as children got older, and whether there were any differences in these trends, between boys and girls.

Again, statistical analyses showed that these changes occurred. Children's dominance behaviour changed as they got older, and the changes were different for boys and girls. Again the trends were quite similar in Australia and Malaysia and in all ethnic groups, suggesting a universal human tendency. Some of these changes are illustrated below.

If we look at these graphs carefully, we can see a general pattern emerging in each country. Levels of dominance were quite low in younger children and about equal for boys and for girls. Then they started to rise, more rapidly for girls than for boys.

So girls in middle childhood were far more assertive than boys in both countries. In the upper primary years, as girls reached or closely approached puberty, their dominance levels declined. Boys, on the other hand, continued to show increased dominance as they grew older, overtaking the girls peak performances in most cases. (Later studies we conducted showed boys' behaviour levelled out after puberty, although they remained the most assertive teenagers.)

AUSTRALIA



MALAYSIA

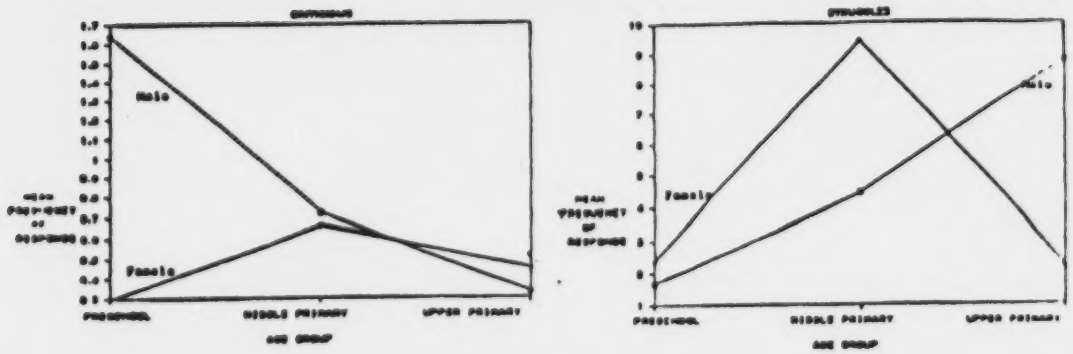


Figure Three: Changes in dominance interaction across age for boys and girls from Malaysia and Australia.

It would seem that although these processes change with age, and differently for boys and girls, nevertheless it would seem that co-operation is the most likely result in multi-ethnic groups, except when the balance of numbers (and power) is changed, so that some threat to the balance of power is perceived by all concerned. Then intra-group tension may result.

So what if I'm not like you? What about us? Are there practical implications from this research?

Some might be tempted to take results such as these and use them politically, for example in arguments about restricting levels of immigration to this country. To those people I would point out that these results refer to the behaviour of children only. So one cannot generalise them to adults. The consistency of the results across all the age groups studied would suggest that adults may well behave this way too. But this research did not include a study of adults, and to my knowledge, no other study has done so either. And until such research is done, no conclusions about behaviour should be drawn. And, too, they address only the issue of face to face interaction in small groups. They tell us nothing about what happens in other contexts.

However, if we concentrate on the behaviour of children alone, and draw inferences only from the research, are there other implications for social policy or educational practice? As an applied social scientist, I would hope that there are.

One immediate possibility which stems from the results is that those concerned with promoting cohesive relationships between children of different ethnicity might be able to use these findings in a systematic way.

For example, one school in Darwin whose children had been involved in the research, decided, on the basis of these findings, that they would apply them to small group work in classrooms. They found that over-assertive Australian children could be encouraged to be more restrained, by setting them to work with small numbers of ethnically different children, since co-operation was more likely to be enhanced in this situation. And, of course, the converse applied, as ethnically different children could be encouraged to be more assertive when working in groups in which they had some moral support from ethnically similar peers. As a result, problem children of both types were greatly helped, and the personal development of all children in the classroom was increased as a result of being exposed to new ways of social interaction.

These are only examples of what was tried. There are a number of different possibilities which depend on not only the ethnicity, but also the needs of the child. And perhaps there are other positive implications from the findings which are yet to be explored and tested. I would hope that gatherings such as this can help identify them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The research reported in this paper consists of work conducted in partial fulfilment of the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology of the University, N.S.W., (1984). I would like to acknowledge, with gratitude, the assistance of Associate Professor Daphne M. Keats of that University, Professor Madya, Dr. Wan Rafel Abdul Rahman, Head of Department of Psychology of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, for advice and support, the Department of Education of the Northern Territory of Australia and the Malaysian Ministry of Education for granting permission to conduct the research, and to those numerous individuals in both countries who acted as research assistants or gave technical support. And, of course, the work could not have been done without the participation of the teachers and children of Darwin and Malaysia.

APPENDIX ONE

Statistical details

Eigenvalues and percent of variance accounted for by factors extracted from Malaysian and Australian data

	COUNTRY			
	AUSTRALIA		MALAYSIA	
FACTOR	EIGENVALUE	% VARIANCE	EIGENVALUE	% VARIANCE
1	19.87	76.1	20.66	82.6
2	2.99	11.5	2.20	8.8
3	1.92	7.3	1.39	5.6
4	0.88	3.4	0.76	3.1
5	0.44	1.7	-	-

Intercorrelations of Australian and Malaysian Factors

		FACTOR			
		2	3	4	5
	1	+.6430	+.1954	-.0657	+.0198
	2		+.2097	-.0204	-.0474
AUSTRALIA	3			+.1924	-.1549
	4				+.0183
FACTOR					
	1	+.7656	+.2133	+.0390	
MALAYSIA	2		+.2929	+.0387	
	3			+.1580	

Australian and Malaysian factor structures

	FACTOR ONE				FACTOR TWO			
	AUSTRALIA		MALAYSIA		AUSTRALIA		MALAYSIA	
VARIABLE	TASK	LOADING	TASK	LOADING	TASK	LOADING	TASK	LOADING
Board object contest	coop	.8958	coop	.9731	comp	.9218	comp	.9225
Marble object contest	coop	.9057	coop	.9643	comp	.9084	comp	.9274
Physical threat	coop	.9661	coop	.9701	comp	.9039	comp	.9429
Physical attack	coop	.9666	coop	.9693	comp	.9026	comp	.9434
Attentional focus	coop	.9388	coop	.6401	comp	.9043	comp	.8059
Offers	coop	.9488	coop	.9409	comp	.8940	comp	.9630
Smiles	coop	.9102	coop	.5963	comp	.6344	comp	.7291
Orders	coop	.9140	coop	.9796	comp	.9115	comp	.9486
Criticisms	coop	.9711	coop	.9892	comp	.9151	comp	.9550
Arguments	coop	.9669	coop	.9865	comp	.9130	comp	.9581
Verbal threats	coop	.9651	coop	.9008	comp	.9008	comp	.9607
Board struggles	coop	.9448	coop	.9108	comp	.5419	comp	.6531
Rule making		-		.5911		-		-
	FACTOR THREE				FACTOR FOUR (eigenvalue < 1)			
Board tilting	coop	.6235	coop	.4813	comp	.6258		-
		-	comp	.9140		-		-
Board struggles	comp	.4981		-		-		-
Time		-	comp	.4136	comp	.7617	coop	.6250
	FACTOR FIVE (eigenvalue < 1)							
Time	coop	.4584		-				

UTILIZING CONATIONALS AS SUPPORT NETWORK MEMBERS - the case of Asian women.

Presented by Dr. Pauline Meemeduma,
School of Behavioural Science,
James Cook University of North Queensland, Townsville

Introduction

In recent years there has developed a growing awareness of the unique settlement and adaptation needs of migrants and refugees in Australia (Cox, 1987,1989; Martin, 1978).This awareness has developed out of a recognition that migrants and refugees arrive in Australia with a different set of cultural values and assumptions. These cultural values and assumptions act to shape the world of cultural meaning held by the migrant or refugee. This world of cultural meaning, " acts to shape the concept of self and the enactment of social meaning". (Meemeduma, 1988). This culturally prescribed understanding of the world, self and others, is shaped during the earliest socialization period, and is perhaps, as a consequence resistant to significant change (De Vos, 1980). Even when the individual is dislocated from the country of origin, the cultural understanding of the world, others and self remains to shape their experiences in the host country. (Meemeduma, 1988, Almiro, 1982).

Despite an awareness of the importance of culture in shaping how migrants and refugees understand and experience settlement in Australia, and despite a strong commitment on the part of many service providers to assist migrants and refugees, we know little about the relationship between the cultural background of the individual and the development of appropriate and effective helping or support networks in the host country. This lack of knowledge has often led to a set of naive and generalised assumptions on the part of Australian services providers relating to how to effectively and appropriately assist migrants and refugees. Some of these assumptions are (1) linking up the migrant/ refugee with fellow country persons with the expectation that common nationality/ethnicity equates with the creation of a helping/supportive relationship; (2) migrants and refugees will understand and relate to 'official' service providers in the same way as Anglo Australians. As a result, it is assumed that Anglo-Australian based services are essentially appropriate for migrants and refugees, bar superficial tinkering on the periphery of the service format.

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The purpose of this paper is to address some of the above assumptions and to generate some new ideas by which we can

begin to understand and respond to the helping/support needs of migrants/refugees by focusing upon one large group of migrants/refugees, Asian-Australians. Much of the data for this paper comes from research undertaken in the United States and Australia (North Queensland) in 1987 and 1989 by the author on the support networks of Asian women, and therefore relates specifically to the experiences of Asian women. It is however, possible that many of the conclusions have relevance to Asian men and to other migrant/refugee communities in Australia.

The author is aware of the pitfalls in the use of the generic term Asian. Clearly, such a term encompasses many cultures and societies. With this in mind, it is felt however, that there are sufficient common aspects amongst Asian cultures to warrant the use of the term.

Much of the impetus for this paper arose from a growing awareness on the part of the author that much of our social welfare practice knowledge and service provision made little sense within the context of many Asian cultures and their expatriate communities in Australia.. This irrelevance persists, and as such presents Australian social welfare service providers with the serious challenge of developing culturally appropriate and effective social welfare service provisions for Asian migrants and refugees in Australia.

To develop appropriate and effective social welfare services for Asian women in Australia our thinking needs to be more inductive, rather than deductive. We need to begin to identify the basic cultural factors upon which Asian women shape their settlement experiences in Australia. If we can identify the cultural parameters of the Asian women's 'world of meaning' we can build upon these to develop a culturally appropriate and effective service response in Australia. Such an Asian culturally grounded approach to service knowledge development and provision, would be in sharp contrast to our present approach which builds upon an Anglo-Australian cultural basis.

Utilizing the above knowledge building approach, the support/helping needs of Asian women in Australia will be discussed.

The Supportive/helping Relationship.

Support may be defined for present purposes as those formal and informal structures that provide the individual with instrumental, social and personal (emotional) resources which facilitate the psycho-social well-being of the individual (Tietjen, 1978). These formal and informal structures which form around the individual, are frequently referred to as support networks. In social welfare service provisions is is hypothesized that the availability of support networks acts to buffer the impact of life stressors upon the individual (Hoppa, 1986).

Tietjen (1978), correctly argues that people have different types of support needs, and hence correspondingly, they will require different types of support in response to these needs. Tietjen, (1978), identifies three types of support, these are:

1. **Instrumental support** - may be defined as behaviour which provides material and informational support. Support in this category would include help in finding or providing accommodation, the provision of money, aid in finding a job, or advice in overcoming a problem.
2. **Social support** - may be defined as behaviour where more casual social contacts are established, but where there is little personal sharing of self. Such behaviours would include social dinners and lunches, chatting on the street, occasional telephone contact, or occasional activities together.
3. **Personal support** - may be defined as behaviour where there is an active sharing of personal/emotional self and where continuation of the relationship contributes to individual feelings of self-worth. Here individuals are more prepared to share aspects of their private world of feelings and problems.

Common sense would indicate that an individual may be acceptable to a person as part of their instrumental support network and yet unacceptable as part of their personal support network. The degree of overlap of support network membership categories appears to vary however. It is quite realistic to consider that an individual who was part of a personal support network would be more likely to be part of the same person's social and instrumental support network. Conversely, this overlap principle may not necessarily occur. We may utilize individuals

for instrumental and social support, or only one of these, and exclude them from any personal support role.

Cultural Factors Shaping the Support Network.

In addressing the problem of how best to respond to the helping/support needs of Asian women in Australia two key questions arise; these are:

1. What is the culturally prescribed nature of relationships in Asian societies and what are the social norms and values which underpin these relationships?.

2. Utilizing knowledge from the above area, can we begin to identify differential support needs of Asian women, with a corresponding differential support response by various types of people?.

If we can begin to answer the above questions we then may be in a position to identify the appropriate person for the specific need. Thus we may avoid the pitfalls in present day servicing which assumes one person is appropriate to respond to all the needs of an Asian woman.

In terms of the focus of the study, the question then is which types of individuals are utilized for which of the above support functions amongst Asian migrant and refugee women?. To be able to answer this question we need to begin to understand the cultural characteristics of Asian interpersonal interactions.

In contrast to Western societies, such as Australia, where the individual is the basic unit of society, in many Asian societies it is the family-kin group which is the basic unit of society. This emphasis is represented in the rights and obligations of family-kin members towards each other, encouragement of loyalty and cooperation towards the family-kin group, a concern over family-kin status and respectability, a perception that the interests of the individual are realized through the family/kin unit, where non-family-kin members are viewed as outsiders and with suspicion, and as such are see as potential threats to the continued well being of the family-kin group (Almiro, 1982)

In many Asian societies, the importance of the family-kin group shapes the meaning, conduct and outcome of interpersonal relationships in several ways (Meemeduma, 1988).:

1. The individual in any inter personal interaction represents the family-kin group and is not free to conduct the relationship in a totally individuated way. The individual is contained by expectations to maintain family-kin status and respectability in interactions with non-family-kin members.

2 This emphasis upon the individual's responsibility to maintain family-kin status and respectability has two important consequences:

a. The individual is expected to keep matters which may damage the family-kin group's status and respectability within the family-kin group. As such support network members, particularly in relation to personal support needs will be sought within the family-kin group.

b. A concern that family-kin matters may go beyond the family-kin group, and hence be the subject of gossip and as such threaten family-kin status and respectability

3. Relationships between family-kin members are characterised by intense emotionality and reciprocity. Primary socialization emphasises intense dependency upon the family-kin group. This dependency is qualatively different in character from the dependency evidenced in Western relationships. It reflects an unconditional and non-temporal set of expectations to give and receive support across the range of support needs identified, (Roland, 1984).

4. Relationships between conational non-family-kin members, as with family-kin members, are guided by the need to maintain harmony and unity, without disclosures which threaten the status and respectability of the family-kin group.

5. Individuals who are not a family-kin member, but with whom a close relationship has developed, can be incorporated within the family-kin group network. The non-family-kin member is often given an ascriptive family-kin group status such as little sister or older brother. By such ascriptive status designation the relationship, now assumes all the rights expectations and obligations of the family-kin group. By such a process, within many Asian societies, interpersonal relationships, essentially become highly dichotomized, between family-kin members and non-family-kin members (Marriot, 1976)

6. It is assumed, unless proven otherwise, that conational non-family-kin members will gossip about family-kin matters and that family-kin members will not. As such, although non- family kin members may be utilized for some degree of instrumental and social support, they are less likely to be utilized for personal support

Other factors which shape interpersonal relationships in many Asian societies, to varying degrees, are class (and to a lesser degree caste), gender, and age. These factors act to generate a form of lateral and horizontal heterogeneity. Hierarchical differences in status within many Asian societies, are predominantly based upon class position; the higher the class the greater the status. This class position is however, is not solely based upon economic wealth, but is also inter related to the traditional power and authority role a family/kin group holds. There is also inter and intra group divisions within many Asian societies based upon ethnic, religious and caste difference. Traditionally, men are ascribed a more important position within the social order than women, whilst the young person is expected to defer to an older person. (Ramu, 1977).

We can now see that within many Asian societies there exists (like all societies) sets of rules and norms about whom one will interact with and in what manner. Generally speaking, it may be argued that the focus of most Asian inter personal relationships is the family-kin group. This group is the key source of instrumental, social and emotional support for the individual. Outside the family-kin group inter personal relationships are generally confide to others who are similar in terms of such characteristics of class, religion and ethnicity, although as non-family-kin members the type of support provided is more generally restricted to instrumental and social support.

Settlement in Australia,

It is to be expected that the factors which act to shape inter personal relationships in the Asian home country, will also act to shape the nature of the new relationships established in the host country. The remainder of this paper will focus upon how the family-kin model of inter-personal relationships brought from the Asian home country persists in shaping the nature of the support

experiences of Asian women in the host country and the implications this has for Australian service providers

My research suggests that the family-kin based model of inter-personal relationships continues to influence the nature of the support networks that form around Asian woman, in both Australia and in the United States. If members of the family-kin group are available in the area where the Asian woman settles, either prior or subsequent to settlement, then they generally exclusively constitute the preferred instrumental, social and personal support network of the Asian woman. The type of instrumental, social and emotional support provided by family/kin members, as reported by Asian women in the two studies was usually extensive (eg the provision of long term accommodation, financial assistance, constant social contact and significant emotional support), (Meemeduma, 1988; Meemeduma & Moraes-Gorecki,1990).

In both the American study and the Australian study the question arose as to whether the preference to utilize family-kin members as support network members (and in particular emotional support network members) lessened if family-kin members were not accessible? That is, were the Asian women in the study prepared to turn to fellow co nationals or to Australians or Americans to meet their support needs if family-kin members were not available?. If they were prepared to turn to non-family-kin members for what type of need did they receive support?

The answers to these questions appears to relate to the type of support needed.

In terms of instrumental and social support, if family-kin members were not available locally in the host country, then turning to people from one's own country and most often one's own ethnic group was the preferred choice. What became apparent during the interviews with the women in both studies was, that similar to the family/kin group their existed a set of normative assumptions relating to the expected instrumental and social support role of conationals. Co nationals were expected to help out in terms of instrumental and social support, particularly in the early stages of settlement. In both studies there were many reports of the significant instrumental and social support

provided by conationals (Meemeduma, 1988; Meemeduma & Moraes-Goercki, 1990).

In terms of personal support, in both studies, only a small minority of the women indicated they would turn to a conational for personal support. In both studies, concern over the problem of gossip within the ethnic expatriate community precluded any active sharing of personal problems with people from one's own ethnic/conational group.. What was interesting however, was when questioned, very few of the women could actually give examples where they had had problems with gossip. What appeared to be happening was that preconceptions about the conduct of inter personal relationships brought from the Asian home country were being applied to the host country context with minimal questioning of their validity. in the new setting. There is little doubt however, that the concern over gossip is a significant factor shaping the utilization of conationals as personal support network members within Asian expatriate communities and needs to be taken account of. Too often, Australians bring together people together from the same country, particularly in the use of a translator, where there is a personal problem, without first considering whether it is appropriate to raise personal matters before a non-family-kin member.

It appears then that utilizing conationals for support has to be cognizant of the differential support role they can appropriately provide. The research has shown the important instrumental and social support role of conationals (Almirol, 1982; Meemeduma, 1988; Meemeduma & Moraes-Gorecki, 1990; Robinson, 1986) Caution needs however, to be shown in utilizing conationals for personal support without checking how the Asian woman feels about the disclosure of family-kin matters to non-family kin conationals.

If family-kin members and conationals were not available it appeared that members of the host society, i.e Australians or Americans tended to be utilized as a last resort. The support provided by members of the host society was predominantly related to instrumental needs. Instrumental support provided by Australians or Americans was predominantly obtained through formal service organisations (Government Departments, social

welfare agencies) and to a lesser degree through informal contacts, such as neighbours. The type of support provided tended to relate to one-off information and advice giving. In a small of number of cases, in both studies, Australians and Americans also provided social support, although this support tended to be relatively minor in relation to the social support role of conationals. or family-kin members.

There was however, an exception to the limited support role host society members played in the lives of Asian women living in Australia and America. A small group of host society members, exclusively women, had become part of the personal support network of the Asian women. Two factors appeared to be generating this atypical personal support relationship. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly the Asian women perceived the host society member who was part of her personal support network, as not being at risk of gossiping about family-kin matters. This perception appeared to be based on their perception that Australians and Americans did not gossip like their own people. It also appeared to be more pragmatically grounded, in that the Asian women frequently kept a strict separation between their own conational relationships and their host society relationships. As such, because the host society women were not in contact with other member's of the expatriate community they therefore had no opportunity to gossip about family-kin matters or to inflict damage upon the status of the family-kin group. (Meemeduma, 1988; Meemeduma & Moraes-Gorecki, 1990). This suggests, that if members of the host society are respectful and understanding of the cultures the women come from and of the concerns with gossip, then crossing the personal support network boundaries of Asian women, when they are in need of help, may be possible.

Research seems to suggest that despite (or maybe because of) dislocation from their country of origin the family-kin group remains the paramount support network resource, at all levels of support. This support network was maintained, despite distance, to encompass a national and international link-up with members of their family-kin group.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can perhaps start to move towards developing a general model of support needs ands types of members utilized to guide our work with Asian-Australian women. This model is presented in Fig 1.

Fig 1.
A Model of Support Needs and Support Member Utilization.

Support Need	Type of Network Member *		
	Family-kin	Co national	Australian
Instrumental	YES 1	YES 2	YES 3
Social	YES 1	YES 2	YES 3
Personal	YES 1	?	?

Order of preference 1 (highest preferred) to 3 (lowest preferred)

Clearly, the above model is a tentative picture of how we can begin to differentially consider the support needs and support responses required in the face of these needs in a culturally sensitive way. The model attempts to identify which broad categories of persons may be more appropriate for addressing the three types of broad areas of need identified. The model also helps us identify some rank order of preferred network support member in relation to particular. support needs

At this stage of the model's development a question mark is perhaps more appropriate in relation to conational and host society member and personal support needs. Clearly, as indicated earlier in the paper, members of these groups can fulfil personal support needs if particular circumstances exist. It may then be more appropriate to have a question mark, rather than a blanket 'no' to reflect that although members of these two groups may be less likely to be called upon to fulfil the personal; support needs of Asian women, under certain circumstances they may.

The classifications then should be considered as a general guide only, The model should not be considered as a rigid demarcation,

as to who can or cannot provide support for Asian women in a host country context. The model is intended to provide a guide for possible future research Clearly, we need to learn more about the factors shaping the support factors within each of the categories identified.

It is also to be hoped that the model may help to increase Australian welfare personnels' sensitivity to the nature of the cultural dynamics operating in the formation and maintenance of supportive relationships amongst Asian expatriate communities in Australia

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THE REHABILITATION UNIT FOR SURVIVORS OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA (TRUSTT)

A RESPONSE TO THE TORTURE SURVIVOR AND THE FAMILY

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A. INTRODUCTION

(To the three areas covered in this paper)

I would like to begin with some introductory comments:

1. Torture is widely practised throughout the world. Amnesty International estimates that torture is prevalent in more than 90 countries. In general, it takes place behind closed doors. Governments and organizations responsible for torture tend to deny their involvement.

2. Australia, together with a number of other countries whose Governments are not repressive, takes part in the International Refugee and Special Humanitarian Plan.

   Through this plan, and also through the Family Reunion Plan, we receive individuals and families from countries where organised violence, including torture, occurs.

3. By organised violence, I mean all forms of state or institutionalised violence against individuals. Such things as concentration camps, re-education camps, imprisonment and detention without trial, imprisonment in secret unofficial prisons, torture and all forms of inhuman and degrading treatment.

4. It is estimated that between one third to one half of all those arriving from countries where organised violence occurs, have experienced torture or severe trauma in their countries of origin.

5. Every year, Australia receives approximately 145,000 people under the combined Family Reunion and Refugee and Special Humanitarian Plan.

   Approximately 10,000 of these come under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Plan

6. At present Queensland receives approximately 800 people annually under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Plan. Although there is no official figure available, it has been estimated that a further 4,000 people settle in Queensland every year from countries where organised violence is practised. These people come, some as a result of interstate migration during the early settlement phase, and others under the Family Reunion Plan.

7. Thus, at conservative estimate, Queensland has approximately 5,000 people settling annually from countries where organised violence is practised. If one third to one half of these have experienced torture or severe trauma, then <u>on average we</u>

have approximately 2,000 individuals arriving in this state every year who have experienced torture and severe trauma in their countries of origin.

8. It is possible to access well over a kilo of references in the torture and trauma field through the libraries in our respective Universities, hospitals or departments. The international literature is very important and forms the background to the work of our clinic. However, because it is accessible to us all, I will not be reviewing it in this paper.

9. I hope it will be of interest if I focus on the following areas:

   (i) Firstly I would like to give an outline of the Rehabilitation unit for Survivors of Torture and Trauma - known as TRUSTT - how we began and our structure and service model.

   (ii) Secondly, I will try to describe the way in which torture affects the survivor and the family. This section will be based on the observations we have made as we have worked week after week over the past five years with the survivors of torture and trauma.

   (iii) Thirdly, I will outline the way in which we work with the torture survivor and his family.

10. The needs of torture and trauma survivors are universally the same. However, the resources available to meet these needs are not. Indeed in some areas, for example Brisbane, they are quite limited.

11. There are many service models and many different approaches in the torture and trauma fields.

12. This is probably a reflection of the enormous variety of resources which can be utilised in assisting torture and trauma survivors.

13. One factor though is common to all successful work in this field. This factor is the approach which is universally caring, sensitive and compassionate.

14. Even within Australia, the three established services are all quite different in their service models and their treatment approaches. We do, however, all share the common characteristic of sensitive and compassionate care for our survivors and their families.

B.1. THE REHABILITATION UNIT FOR SURVIVORS OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA

1. Background

2. Beginning of TRUSTT

3. Structure and Service Model

I would now like to tell you about the Rehabilitation Unit for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (known as TRUSTT). I would like to give you some background, tell you about the way in which TRUSTT began and outline our structure and service model.

1. BACKGROUND:

(i) The Rehabilitation Unit for Survivors of Torture and Trauma is a section of the Child Psychiatry Department at the Mater Childrens Hospital. The acronym TRUSTT was chosen because trust is the basis of our work.

(ii) The Mater Hospital, as some of you may know, is situated in South Brisbane and services a population which is ethnically very diverse.

(iii) It is close to a site of ancient Aboriginal Settlement. More recently, in the past 200 years, people from England, Scotland, Ireland and China and in this century from Russia, Germany, Italy, the Ukraine, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Laos, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Iran and the continent of South Africa have all established communities within its locality.

(iv) The Child Psychiatry Department is a small cog in the very large machine of the Mater Campus. On campus we have four hospitals: the Mother's, the Adult's, the Children's and the Private, plus the Queensland Radium Institute.

(v) Our Department is small. Three full-time positions and a few visiting sessions of specialist and therapist time. Our case load is significant. We see 500 new children and their families every year. Approximately 2000 people are assessed and treated every year in our Department.

(vi) Torture survivors and their families comprise 3% of our caseload averaged over the past five years. So far we have cared for approximately 90 torture survivors and their families since the first family presented in 1985.

(vii) TRUSTT is a trans-departmental collaboration involving seven different organizations. These organizations work together in order to provide as comprehensive a response as resources will allow to the

tortured families'multi-dimensional needs.

(viii) Each contributing organization is represented on an Administrative Committee which meets once a month. This Committee is responsible for administration and finance. The legal parent body of the Unit is the Corporation of the Trustees of the Order of the Sisters of Mercy.

B.1. TRUSTT

2. THE BEGINNING OF TRUSTT

(i) Our service began in a very small way with a very small person, whom I will call "Jose" who was just four years old when I first met him in October 1985.

(ii) Jose had very severe sleep disturbance, recurrent nightmares, he was frightened of helicopters, loud noises, the Police, anyone in uniform and he had been rather difficult to manage from a parental point of view.

(iii) Jose and his family had just arrived from a Latin American country.

(iv) Six months earlier, he and his parents had been woken from their sleep at 2.00am in the morning, and beaten up by armed men in plain clothes. Jose's parents had been tied up and taken away. He had been left alone. His parents had been held separately for a week and tortured. Jose had later been found by neighbours and taken to his grandparent's home.

(v) Jose and his family were the first torture family to come through our door.

(vi) After Jose there were other families and more families, until at the beginning of 1988 we reached a point when it was more efficient for both families and hospital resources to set aside a specific time every week to see torture survivors and their families.

(vii) Thus, in February 1988 we began a special clinic one half day per week. In this way we could more effectively utilise interpreters and we were able to arrange other appointments for the family on the Mater Complex at this time so as to minimise their travelling expenses.

(viii) The first clinical workers in this service were myself, Child Psychiatrist, a liaison Pharmacist and a cross-cultural worker from the Department of Immigration. We were supported in this work by our Hospital's Parent

Aide Unit and the St. Vincent de Paul and Red Cross Societies.

(ix) The history of the development of our service is closely intertwined with the histories of our families.

What has evolved and what continues to evolve is our attempt with limited resources to respond to their needs.

B.I.TRUSTT

3. THE STRUCTURE AND SERVICE MODEL: (Refer to Diagram)

LOGO (Centre)

The TRUSTT logo symbolises the Unit's work with families. At the Centre is a family depicted moving from the left (the past) towards the right (the future). Behind them and around them as they move forward are the resources and supports of TRUSTT, symbolised by the Mater Logo and the lines radiating out from this.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Supporting the clinical work of TRUSTT are the seven organizations that I mentioned:

The Mater Hospital, DILGEA, St. Vincent de Paul, the Red Cross Society, Ethnic Affairs, the Holy Spirit Sisters, and the Save The Children Fund.

These organizations all contribute funding, personnel and resources to the work of the Unit.

SERVICE PROVISION

The work of the Unit, summarised in the diagram, can be conceptualised as:

1. Clinical Service
2. Community Outreach Programme
3. Community Education Programme

1. CLINICAL SERVICE

(i) By clinical service we mean everything the family needs to restore physical, mental and spiritual health.

(ii) Most of this work is carried out in the Child Psychiatry Department and in other clinics within the Hospital Complex, for we network within our own

Hospital community in order to meet the non-Psychiatric health needs of our torture survivors.

(iii) The clinical staff are all part-time. The work of TRUSTT involves eighty (80) total man hours per week, i.e. the equivalent of two full-time positions.

(iv) The Present Staffing of the Units:

THE PRESENT STAFFING OF THE UNIT

At present the staffing of the unit is all part-time. Each staff member contributes approximately eight hours per week. The present staff is as follows:

1. Child Psychiatrist, Mater Childrens Hospital existing resources.

2. Administrative Assistant, Mater Childrens Hospital existing resources.

3. Pharmacist, Mater Childrens Hospital existing resources

4. Cultural Advisor, DILGEA

5. TIS Interpreter, DILGEA

6. Psychotherapist (Movement), Sisters of Mercy

7. Psychotherapist (Drama), Bureau of Ethnic Affairs

8. Psychotherapist (Art), Save The Children Fund

9. Pain Management Therapist, University of Queensland

10. Home Visitor, Holy Spirit Sisters

11. Visiting Nurse Service, St. Vincent de Paul Society

Members of the clinical team do work, when necessary, with the family in the home. The St. Vincent de Paul visiting nurse service and the home visitor both provide specific service within the family's home on a regular basis and we hope to develop this aspect of the service further.

2. THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME:

(i) This aspect of the service is available through the Hospital's Parent Aide Unit. The Parent Aide Unit runs a community based service for families in which trained volunteers work with parents and children.

(ii) The Unit was originally developed in response to needs

in the child abuse area, but it has always provided some service to the child Psychiatry Department.

(iii) At present, a small group of trained volunteers are available through this programme to work with newly arrived torture and trauma families. Their work, though limited through lack of funding, is invaluable.

(iv) Ideally, every family should have a Family Support Worker. We are currently seeking funding to develop this aspect of the service further.

3. COMMUNITY EDUCATION:

(i) The Clinical Team and the Management Committee both consider it very important to raise the level of community awareness regarding the needs of torture and trauma survivors.

(ii) For this reason, members of the Clinical Team and Management Committee take part in seminars, meetings and discussions outside the Hospital whenever invited.

(iii) Many of the settlement problems experienced by new arrivals would be minimised if the community as a whole were more aware of their needs and problems in the early settlement stages.

B.2 THE EFFECT OF TORTURE ON THE SURVIVOR AND THE FAMILY

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

(i) The effect of torture on the family unit is very complex. It can be described as multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. The total effect is quite difficult to grasp.

(ii) I will therefore begin this complex section as simply as possible by describing first of all the effect of torture on the survivor.

(iii) I will then go on to look at some aspects of the effect of torture on the family.

(iv) However, before I do either of these things, I would like to give you a basic outline of what is involved in the torture experience.

(v) In this very complex area, our families are our teachers. I hope I can impart something of what I have learned from them to you this morning.

2. THE TORTURE EXPERIENCE:

(i) I will outline a typical torture experience in a typical Latin American family.

(ii) Our typical family consists of two parents, both in their mid-30's and three children, two of primary school and one of pre-school age.

(iii) Eight months prior to the family's arrival in Australia, family was woken at 2.00am in the morning by armed men in plain clothes. These men ransacked the house, beat the family up, tied the parents up and took them away in an unmarked car.

(iv) The parents were then held separately and tortured for a week. The children were left on their own in the house until neighbours came and took them to stay with relatives.

(v) The parents were released because relatives in the armed forces intervened on their behalf.

(vi) On release, the family separated and went into hiding. The children were placed with friends as it was considered too dangerous to place them with relatives. The parents lived separately, moving about in the Capital city to avoid detection.

(vii) The family applied to the CIM Office to come to Australia under the International Refugee and Humanitarian Plan. This in itself was risky as the telephones in the office are bugged and Secret Police watch the area.

(viii) The parents continued to receive threatening letters and calls, although they were constantly changing address and hiding, until the day of departure.

(ix) During this period of hiding, the children saw their mother regularly, but it was considered too dangerous for them to see father. The family came together for the first time in six months when they met at the airport to board the plane for Australia.

(x) It can be seen from this brief outline that there are very significant changes for all family members following the torture experience.

3. <u>THE POST TORTURE SYNDROME:</u>

(i) The aim of torture is to destroy the person without actually killing him.

(ii) The whole person is destroyed, no aspect of his being escapes.

(iii) When looking at the effect of torture on a person, it may be useful to isolate, if you like, four dimensions of our being which, in a healthy person, are in a state of dynamic equilibrium.

The dimensions I have isolated are:

(a) Physical
(b) Mental/Emotional
(c) Social
(d) Spiritual

Each dimension shades into the others, is influenced by and in turn influences the others.

(iv) It is possible to consider each of these dimensions on a health/illness or well-being/dysfunction continuum.

(a) Physical Wellbeing:

Torture may have both direct and indirect effects on physical health.

1. Direct Effects:

(i) These include shattered limbs, embedded bullets, damaged backs and necks, soft tissue and ligamentous damage, damage to specific organs of the body.

(ii) Torture nowadays often leaves no visible marks. Torturers are becoming skilled at inflicting maximum pain, yet leaving little evidence of having done so.

(iii) Many people still die under torture.

2. Indirect Effects:

(i) Ageing: The most striking indirect effect is ageing. Torture survivors all look much older than their chronological age.

(ii) Chronic physical symptoms and signs : In addition to this, they are often troubled by chronic health problems, headaches, pains affecting the back and neck and limbs, the chest, abdomen and pelvis.

(iii) They often have gastrointestinal problems, palpitations, shortness of breath, hypertension and general malaise, tiredness and lack of energy.

(b) Mental and Emotional Wellbeing:

Torture always affects mental health and the emotional wellbeing

of the person. I find it therapeutically useful to think of the mental effects in three groupings:

1. "Affective"

The survivor may have problems in the following areas:

(i) Mood state - mood may be sad, depressed, angry, irritable, unresponsive, detached. Occasionally hypomanic.

(ii) Energy level - usually low, continous tiredness is often present.

(iii) Sleep - torture survivors do not sleep. There are difficulties getting to sleep and staying asleep.

(iv) Appetite- is usually poor.

2. "Cognitive"

There may be problems with:

(i) Memory - erratic and unreliable

(ii) Concentration - poor

(iii) Logical thinking - difficult

(iv) Confusion and disorientation

(v) Indecisiveness

3. "Stress"

There are many stress symptoms, the most common of which are:

(i) Nightmares and bad dreams

(ii) A continuous state of tension and apprehension

(iii) Disassociative episodes and depersonalization

(iv) Auditory and visual hallucinations

(v) Flashbacks

(vi) Panic attacks and exaggerated startle responses.

The torture survivor may experience all these problems in the area of emotional wellbeing.

A very typical pattern would be severe disturbance of sleep and mood, problems with memory and concentration, disorientation,

nightmares and a state of continuous tension and panic attacks.

(c) Social Wellbeing:

1. Torture profoundly affects the survivors ability to relate to other people. There may be major problems with:

(i) Trust
(ii) Identity
(iii) Self-concept
(iv) Self-esteem
(v) Autonomy and independence
(vi) Security

All leading to difficulties in social relationships.

2. A person who has been tortured may trust no-one, may feel deeply humiliated and ashamed and may have lost all self-respect.

3. He may experience intolerable levels of tension and anxiety which are aggravated by the presence of other people. He may therefore be unable to handle even the simplest social situation and may seek isolation, because only in isolation is the level of tension and apprehension manageable.

(d) Spiritual Wellbeing:

1. I am using the term "Spiritual" very broadly to refer to a person's philosophy, belief system, ideals, values and morals: those intangibles for which a person lives and which give purpose and shape to his life, help him maintain morale and confidence in adversity. Torture profoundly affects this aspect of a person's being.

2. Damage to this area of a person's being can be detected in their eyes, which seem dead, and in their body language, posture and non-verbal communication, all of which have a lifeless quality.

It is as if the spirit or sparkle has gone, at least for the time being.

3. Torture may turn a person's whole philosophy of life upside-down, leaving that person empty, confused, bewildered, destroyed and demoralised- a shadow of his former self.

4. POST TORTURE SYNDROME ; THE EFFECT ON THE FAMILY

(i) When the family first arrives in Australia there is usually a tremendous sense of relief at being alive and together. Family members are usually extremely grateful to Australia for assistance and because of this they sometimes have

difficulty in describing how they really feel - which is often just terrible.

(ii) I will now try to explain why the family may, on arrival, feel just terrible.

(iii) In order to understand the effect on the family, one needs to consider the culture to which the family belong and the experiences of the family before, during and after the torture experience.

iv) Reverberations from the torture experience spread out to shatter not only the survivor, but also his family and the society of which the family is a part.

(v) The multi-dimensional nature of the effect of torture may perhaps be appreciated by considering the following issues:

(a) The separation of the family:

The family may have been separated for over a year prior to arrival in Australia.

From the night the parents were taken away, the family's life has changed forever. A year of trauma, stress fear and hiding has followed.

A year in which each family member has faced the daily prospect that this day could be their last.

(b) The Effect on the Torture Survivor of Intergrating with the Family Unit:

We need to consider difficulties a person with the physical, mental and spiritual problems just outlined is likely to have in trying to function within a family unit. Even if all other members of that family unit were relatively well, the dynamic equilibrium of the family would be severely compromised by the presence of such a person within it.

(c) We now need to consider the effect of the torture survivor with all his problems on the family unit, each member of which has endured different traumatic experiences. Each family member has changed in a different way as a result of these experiences and some members of the family may also have been tortured.

(d) Lastly, we need to consider the effect of transplanting the torture survivor in a traumatised family to a new culture, country and language.

(vi) In order to appreciate the effect of torture on the family,

it may be helpful to consider the family before and after the torture experience in four separable areas.

(a) Circumstances
(b) Roles
(c) Relationships
(d) Health

(a) CIRCUMSTANCES:

1. The family's circumstances have changed dramatically since they were last together as a family.

2. Then they owned their own home and car, their health was good, they had servants, pets and a wide extended family and social network. They had no financial problems.

3. Now they are living in cramped circumstances, paying high rent in the private sector, they have lost all their material possessions, they have barely enough money to cover the basics of life.

4. There is no car or servants or pets and extended family is thousands of miles across the sea. Instead of a wide social network they may know only the Department of Immigration worker who met them at the airport.

5. For the children there is a dramatic change in circumstances. For security reasons the children may have been ill-informed regarding the family's situation during the period of hiding in their country of origin. Often the parents cannot find a way of telling their children of everything that has happened.

6. Children have to adapt to a situation in which they can no longer have new clothes and shoes when needed or occasional little treats as has formerly been part of their lifestyle.

7. As the children grasp the reality that they are unlikely to see their grandparents, aunts and uncles again, they become increasingly sad and angry.

(b) ROLES:

Prior to Torture

Father Led a very active business or professional life. His work often took him away from home, although he was usually available at weekends to take part in the family's social life.

Mother 1. Her life revolved around the children and the extended family and was largely independent of father.

2. Her days were busy organising her home and servants, participating in a wide social network, caring for the children, supervising their education and activities, sometimes working part-time in her own original occupation.

Children Were the pride and joy of an extended family network, always surrounded by dependable adults, either servants or members of the extended family or their parents, leading lives carefully organised for them by their parents.

After Torture - in Australia

Father
1. Is now almost always at home, except when he is attending language classes. His network of professional and business associates has gone.
2. The symptoms of Post Torture Syndrome make study difficult. Time hangs very heavily.
3. He longs to be part of the work force again, but his health problems and the language barrier make this, for the time being, an impossibility

Mother
1. Extended family, servants and material possessions are gone.
2. The family has arrived with a few clothes and possibly a few hundred dollars. Post Torture symptoms make running the house and caring for the children a task of overwhelming proportions.

Children
1. From the time the parents were taken away, the children's lives have changed dramatically.
2. Having lived through months of insecurity in their country of origin, they may be required now to quickly orientate to a completely new culture, country and language.
3. If their parents have been very adversely affected by torture, there may be almost complete role reversal as school age children negotiate many of the settlement tasks on behalf of the parents, infants and grandparents in the family.

(c) FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Before the torture experience family relationships were characterised by tolerance, good humour and a shared interest in the children and their development.

2. Parents, as mentioned, led largely separate lives: father's life revolving around his business and mother's around the extended family and social network.

3. Relationships within the nuclear family were buffered by the extended family network, servants, nannies and friends. If parents or children had a falling out, there was a wide choice of skilled listeners and negotiators available for counselling and support, but differences were soon settled and forgotten.

4. The torture experience has changed every member of the family in a different way. Furthermore, the family has been separated for a considerable period after this with no opportunity to relate or to interact.

5. When the family comes together in Australia, the whole structure has changed. Each family member has changed and therefore members must find a new way of relating and interacting.

6. In addition to this, the family is thrown almost completely on its own resources for the first time in its life at a time when its resources are at an all time low.

7. Family members are likely to be irritable, easily upset, up and down in their mood, and without the buffers of extended family and friends. Relationships are often extremely strained.

8. Family members who have suffered the most extreme experiences need to debrief. However, they trust no-one outside the nuclear family and debriefing to members of their nuclear family only increases the stress and tension within the family.

9. Family members may bottle up feelings which should not be bottled up and these feelings may be displaced tragically, resulting in injury or worse to the self or others.

10. Parents may find it impossible to resume their previous relationship with each other and with the children.

11. Because of the profound effect of torture on every aspect of their wellbeing their relationship may be quite unstable. They find it very difficult to relate to each other The sexual aspect of their

relationship is often difficult or non-existent.

12. Family relationships are at least profoundly shaken and at worse completely shattered by the torture experience. A situation which causes family members grave distress.

(d) HEALTH:

1. Before torture, the family usually enjoyed good physical and mental health. If health problems arose they were able to seek good medical advice with consequent resolution of the problem.

2. After torture, however, the situation changes dramatically. Torture survivors have considerable physical health problems in the weeks after torture and sometimes these continue for months and years.

3. There are always serious mental health problems.

4. After torture unfortunately, for security reasons, it may be impossible for the survivor to seek adequate help and treatment and the physical and mental suffering may continue throughout the months in hiding.

5. When the family arrives in Australia health problems are usually the most urgent. The torture survivor usually has problems with both the physical and mental consequences of torture. The children all have Post Traumatic Stress Syndromes. Family members are often under weight with numerous somatic complaints - a result of the chronic stress and sub-optimal living situation of the previous months.

6. The children may sleep poorly, often quite weepy, have difficulty concentrating in class, trouble relating to other children. This usually takes the form of withdrawal and shyness, but occasionally, particularly in the boys, there is an unacceptable aggression towards other children.

7. The parents may be so over burdened with their own health problems they are unable to attend to the children.

8. We are looking at a family unit in which every member has significant mental and physical health problems.

9. A family unit in which no-one has the physical or mental capacity to cope with the health problems of other family members. No-one is well enough to

stabilise the family unit.

5. SUMMARY:

(i) In summary, I have tried to outline for you the way in which torture can affect not only the survivor, but also the family. The family is the unit through which the society is repressed.

(ii) I have tried to show how this is a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional effect. By tracking back in time, I have tried to give you an understanding of how the family came to the point at which we see them when they come to our Clinic.

(iii) I have tried to give you a glimpse of where the family has come from and compare this with where it is at now.

(iv) I hope, in doing so, that I have helped you to understand some of the issues which are relevant to traumatised families.

B.3. THE TRUSTT APPROACH TO THE TORTURE SURVIVOR AND FAMILY

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

(i) During the past five years families presenting for assistance have come mainly from Latin America. More recently we have been seeing families from Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Iran.

(ii) Our Service Model is in a state of continuous evolution as we learn from our families, from one another, from the reports and publications of others working in the field and our correspondence with them.

(iii) Our management is largely determined by the resources available to us as we attempt to meet the needs of the torture survivors and their families.

(iv) Our resources are our Clinical Team and its associated support services.

(v) Unfortunately, space limitations prevent the entire team from working together at any point in time. However, we set aside Wednesday as the TRUSTT Clinic day, and on that day as many members of the team as can be accommodated work in close proximity.

(vi) Other members of the team come later in the day for a clinical meeting. This is the only time in the week when the whole team is able to be together.

(vii) Working with the Clinical, Team we have the Parent Aide Unit, it's co-ordinator and the trained volunteers who work with selected families.

(viii)We also have the resources of the Mater Campus.

(ix) Almost every family has its physical health checked by Specialists, Physicians and Paediatricians working on the Campus for the University of Queensland. Some family members need surgical services and again these are accessed through the University of Queensland specialist staff.

(x) Practical support and help for our families is available through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Red Cross Society who are both part of the TRUSTT network.

(xi) Our approach is multi-faceted. We work in different ways and on different levels. Sometimes simultaneously and sometimes sequentially.

(xii) We have found it important to deal with whatever the family presents and to prioritise according to the family's needs.

(xiii) The team approach is welcoming and informal. We always offer our families light refreshments. It is rare for a child to leave our unit without a small gift, some sweets and a toy.

(xiv) We have found that it is most important for the therapist to have a human face and in addition to being well trained, sensitive and skilful, to have the ability to "walk" with the family in a compassionate and caring relationship.

(xv) The therapist supports and stabilises the family as it moves from its initial state of fragmentation towards reintegration. We all work very hard to establish sufficient basic trust to enable the family to work with us.

(xvi) As I mentioned, our approach is our attempt to respond to our families multi-dimensional needs and therefore I will talk about our approach by referring to our family's needs as they struggle to deal with the past and prepare for the future in Australia.

2. THE FAMILY'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE FIRST YEAR AND BEYOND

A. The First Weeks

(i) Families with Post Torture Syndrome usually present to the Clinic shortly after arrival in Australia. During these

first weeks the family is suffering from Severe Post Torture Syndrome and what we call Culture Shock.

(ii) This means that family members are sleeping and eating poorly, experiencing instability of mood, disorientation, problems with memory and cognitive functioning. Nightmares and other stress related symptoms are common. Those who have had the most severe torture are the most severely affected.

(iii) We start by seeing all the presenting members of the family together and during this initial assessment interview, which I do in association with an Interpreter, I try to gain an understanding of the range and severity of the family's problems. Pressing problems are dealt with straight away. For example, if members have pain, they are referred to the appropriate Specialist and are usually seen within 48 hours.

(iv) The family and I then prioritise their needs with particular emphasis on the health needs and we make a plan for dealing with these. Following this, my Administrative Assistant and I arrange appointments for the family which are organised by the time we see them the following week.

(v) During the first weeks the family's physical health problems are taken care of within the wider resources of the Mater Complex. Our patients are rarely referred to Out-patient Clinics. They are seen privately by University of Queensland Specialists where at all possible because this avoids long waits and crowded waiting room situations. It is very personal because they are attended by the Specialist's Secretary and then by the Specialist himself or herself. This works well and our patients are not traumatised by these arrangements.

(vi) When there is an appointment muddle, and these occur frequently because of the family's disorientation, memory and cognitive problems, they know they can always see our Secretary and she will sort it out for them.

(vii) We have found that it is important to allow each member of the family to talk privately. Often matters of critical importance to the person's recovery are only revealed privately.

(ix) Through this family and individual process of assessment, the needs of each family member become apparent. These needs are usually discussed in a general way within the wider family setting and appropriate therapy is commenced.

(x) We find that everyone who has experienced severe trauma and torture is in need of some form of psychotherapy. Children, adolescents and adults all require psychotherapy

tailored to suit their particular needs.

(xi) Adults who have been tortured always require medication and occasionally adolescents are also in need of medication.

(xii) We use tricyclic antidepressants, mainly Trimipramine and Prothiaden for the depressive and cognitive symptom clusters, and Clonidine 25mcg tablets for the stress related symptoms.

(xiii) We commence medication as soon as possible as both medications are slow acting. With tricyclics we achieve a good night's sleep within ten days. With Clonidine there is usually a reduction in stress and tension within a fortnight.

(xiv) However, it is a month before disorientation clears and approximately six weeks before mood stabilises with the help of tricyclics. Similarly with Clonidine, although the overall stress level may be reduced within a fortnight, the nightmares, flash backs, disassociative episodes, etc, usually do not diminish until medication has been taken for over a month.

(xv) By about three months, we find that memory problems and concentration begin to improve on tricyclics.

(xvi) During these first weeks the family has so many physical and mental health problems that the Therapist and Family Support Worker's role is primarily one of simply being there for the family.

(xvii) The family often require much practical support and in this area we have considerable help from St. Vincent de Paul and the Red Cross Society.

(xviii) These initial weeks are the most difficult for the family. Usually whilst seriously cognitively handicapped by their symptoms, they are trying to negotiate Medicare, Health Care, Social Security, language classes, accommodation and transport. It is an extremely stressful period.

B. <u>The Second and Third Month</u>

(i) During the second and third month the situation begins to come under control from both the family's and the Clinic's point of view.

(ii) Usually by this time the acute physical problems are all under treatment within the Mater Complex and the mental health problems are starting to resolve.

(iii) Family members are sleeping soundly, are eating better and are more stable in mood.

(iv) By the end of the third month disorientation, memory and cognitive problems are usually resolving, the corollary of this being the family's sudden and noticeable improvement in command of the English language

(vi) During this period the Family Support Worker is able to start working with the family in helping them establish networks within their local community. The family are now able to retain what she tells them and are therefore able to take the first steps on the long path towards integration with the Australian community.

(vii) During this period individual psychotherapy starts for affected family members

(viii) Until the end of the third month, a whole range of issues are troubling and stressing the family and these all require attention. As time goes on these matters are sorted out and the Therapist and family member are able to settle into a more traditional psychotherapeutic relationship.

(ix) In therapy we have found it necessary to be very flexible indeed. The Therapist must be prepared to deal with whatever the patient presents, whether it be difficult material relating to the trauma experiences, whether it be some practical issue such as the lawn mower breaking down unexpectedly, it is important for the Therapist to appreciate that whatever the patient presents is for him a major problem.

(x) It is critical to the faith and trust which we seek to build in our trauma survivors, that the Therapist help with every problem the survivor presents, however minor these problems may seem to the Therapist.

(xi) We use various forms of psychotherapy. In our work with adults we mainly utilised the traditional verbal type of psychotherapy with the already mentioned exibility to deal with whatever the patient presents.

(xii) This year, however, we have been fortunate in being able to develop our Creative Arts Psychotherapy Programme. We currently have just brought on to staff a therapist utilising drama, one utilising music and movement, and a further utilising fine arts. We also have a therapist who specialises in pain management and works in the area of somatic pain, head ache, back and neck ache and generalised muscular pain and discomfort.

C. Three to Six Months

(i) During this period the family usually experiences a restoration of physical and mental health. Symptoms and signs resolve.

(ii) The family has more energy, is beginning to reintegrate and the task of the Support Worker and Therapist is to foster the family's new-found autonomy and developing independence.

(iii) We do this in many ways. We take a close interest in the family's attempts to integrate with the Australian community.

(iv) We encourage our families to participate in the life of their local school and district. For example, parish activities, play group, kindergarten.

(v) We are as pleased as they are with the signs of acceptance, such as invitations to afternoon tea, a bar-b-que or a child's birthday party.

D. Six to Twelve Months

(i) During the second half of the first year in Australia therapy continues. This is often a period of solid work repairing the damage wrought by past experiences and gearing up for an active role in the Australian community.

(ii) The family at this stage is usually functioning autonomously, although there is a need for background support in the event of crises or unexpected problems. Intensive therapy is almost always completed within a year.

E. Beyond the First Year

(i) Contact is usually maintained throughout the second year. Patients with Post Torture Syndrome usually need to continue medication beyond the first year and they are therefore seen at regular intervals because of this.

(ii) Post Torture Syndrome is a fluctuating disorder and may be triggered by a whole range of environmental stimuli. Relapses during the second year are quite common and if actively treated result in minimal disability.

(iii) Families who have had moderately severe trauma often choose to keep in social contact during the second year, knowing that if they need assistance for any problems, they can receive it at any time.

(iv) The Department has a number of therapeutic and supportive

activities which we offer to family members as it appears appropriate. Some of the primary school age children attend a Music Therapy Group. Adolescent children may join our Adolescent Support Group and parents have a Parent Support Group. These groups run on a weekly basis and are ethnically diverse.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

A. Security

We maintain very tight security in relationship to our patients. Our families know that anything discussed with us is kept in the strictest confidence. The hospital record contains only physical health problems and in the case of children, physical and developmental problems.

We are careful about the way in which we introduce families. Usually first names only are used. We do not refer to the person's country, province, nor where they are living now. If families choose to give these details to one another, we are of course happy, but we are sensitive to the difficulties which can arise.

We see families from all sides of their respective National conflicts. In the case of the Latin American families, there are people who have been tortured by the army, the Secret Police and the Guerrillas. There are simple country people who have been caught in the conflict and sophisticated professional people from the city who have come under attack.

B. Outreach

We do provide an Outreach Service for families living outside of the Brisbane Metropolitan Area. If a torture family is sent outside of Brisbane, we are able through our ability to provide accommodation in the Hospital's Reg Leonard Units, to offer at least an initial assessment and treatment period for the family.

We do our best to link in with the family's local resources in terms of continuing treatment and rehabilitation, and again through the Patient Transit Scheme, there is the possibility of bringing the family back for regular reviews as necessary.

C. Flexibility of Role

As I have mentioned, we find it necessary to work on all levels, often simultaneously.

Thus, I myself can be working on basic needs and higher order needs all in the same treatment session. If there has been a muddle over Social Security and the family is temporarily without money and food, we might spend part of the session organising

this for them through St. Vincent de Paul, and part of the session listening to a particularly frightening nightmare experienced by mother or father and another part of the session organising medication.

Mother may then want me to make a call to the child's school teacher to explain some point which she wasn't able to get across herself in English and I may do this while she is still in my room.

Our Trauma Clinic may look to an external observer to be a chaotic situation. It is a very busy situation, but in reality the chaos is organised. We usually see a dozen families on a Clinic day and we, myself, the Pharmacist, the Interpreter and the Therapists, together with our Administrative Assistant, all work very hard to support our families and meet their needs.

The object for us all is a healthy, functioning family able to make its way happily and successfully in the Australian community.

C. CONCLUSION

1. It seems to me that we have come some distance since that October day in 1985 when I first coaxed little Jose into my room and with my four year old guide took my first tentative steps into the world of the torture survivor and his family.

2. Little did I think that five years later I would have seen hundreds of little Jose's and that a Unit would have developed in a response to the needs of all these tremendous little people and their families.

3. The staff of TRUSTT look forward to a day when torture will no longer exist on this planet and when there will be no need for a Unit such as ours. It seems likely though that there will be a need for some service, at least for the foreseeable future and so we have a staged Development Plan and would like to see the establishment of a Unit consisting of seven full-time and three part-time staff.

4. Our seven full-time staff are as follows:

    (a) Child Psychiatrist/Director
    (b) Psychotherapist
    (c) Secretary
    (d) Pastoral Care Worker
    (e) Visiting Nurse
    (f) Family Support Co-ordinator
    (g) Cross-cultural worker

    Part-time staff (20 hours per week):

    (a) Pharmacist

(b) Pain Management Therapist
(c) Cultural Advisor

5. Such a team should be able to cater for all new arrivals who have survived torture and major trauma, as well as families settling within the last 20 years from countries where war or organised violence prevails.

6. I have tried this morning to cover the background to, and the work of, the Rehabilitation Unit for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma. I have also tried to give you a feeling for the way in which torture affects the survivor and the family.

7. TRUSTT is a small Unit in the process of evolution. An evolution which is determined by our families needs on the one hand and our resources on the other.

8. We chose our name, the acronym TRUSTT, because trust is basic to all our work with torture survivors and families. Without some degree of trust, they will not recover and we will be unable to help.

9. Trust is something which evolves as we walk along with the family in a caring relationship.

10. TRUSTT, with two t's, began, although I didn't know it then, when Jose took me by the hand and I began what has been a five year journey into the world of the torture survivor. Clinically, it has been a very interesting and rewarding experience. Administratively, there have been many difficulties. A major problem still being that of finding permanent funding.

11. As we walk with our families towards the future, we hope that the trust we work so hard to establish will go with them and be the corner-stone of the new life they are building in Australia

12. Trust as I mentioned is an evolving process. It is also our name.

ABORIGINAL ISSUES

Presented by Mr. Alec Illin,
Aboriginal Liaison Officer,
Community Services, Townsville City Council.

History

When we talk about Aboriginal Culture we talk about survival. Our cultures are a symbol of what unites us. That diversity is our strength - IT IS OUR IDENTITY. I wish to refer you to the following statement recently made by one of our leaders, and I quote:

> "We don't say - this is our religious life, this is our POLITICAL LIFE, this is our economic life and this is our cultural life. Because they are all one thing.
>
> Our culture underpins our life. We must continue to maintain it and to ensure it forms our future.
>
> It is our culture which has sustained us during the traumatic expansion of the past, in Australia's case during two hundred years of White Settlement and Colonisation.
>
> Our 50,000 years of occupation of this Country have been our strength in the face of this transformation.
>
> In Australia today indigepous people are a minority.
>
> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 1.43% of the total population that is just/statistic. There are others.
>
> The average life expectancy is twenty years less than for other Australians.
>
> Infant mortality is three times higher than for non-Aboriginal Australians.
>
> Aboriginal income levels are half as high and a large proportion of Aboriginal families live in sub-standard housing and crude shelter made from scrap."

Health

Since the European colonization of Australia "The Aboriginal health problem has been the subject of close but misunderstood scrutiny. This has taken the form of Government inquiries, Colonial, Imperial, State and Parliamentary debates. Official protection, missionary interventions and private learned debates. All to no avail. My people, the Indigenous Australians, remain the sickest people in Australia today".

For too long Aborigines have been defined by Europeans. Today, we are starting to re-assess our place in society and to adopt our new individual identity. In doing so, we will automatically become aware of not only who we are, but how we can solve our own problems.

Since 1788 the Aboriginal tribes have been dying out. In 1930 throughout Queensland, there would have been not less than 100,000. The 1986 Queensland Census estimates a figure of only 61,000.

Improvement in the Aboriginal health programmes cannot be addressed until the basic issue of poverty is addressed. Some experts want to spend millions of dollars on high technology in remote areas. However, until proper sanitation, clean running water, healthy nutritional food, and good employment opportunities, all of which are enjoyed by the average white Australian, are seen as priorities for a healthy life, no real gains will be achieved. Social, political, economic, religious and spiritual elements are all relevant when examining the health status of my people.

The uncertainty associated with the Western lifestyle, and the loss of the traditional way of life, will have to be examined before improvements in Aboriginal health will occur. Our values are different from those of Europeans. We must promote our own uniqueness and from that, I believe, a solution will come to our present sad predicament of uncertainty and vulnerability. By keeping what is acceptable from Western society and recognising our strengths regarding kinship and the family, survival not only for my people is possible, but a better lifestyle for all who live in our country. Aboriginal health by the year 2000 can only have a positive future because of our remarkable survival against all odds, a triumph of our incredible adaptive capabilities.

Education

In Australia a sharp changed occurred in 1967 which increased the political will of the federal government to act. In 1967 a referendum placed in the hands of that government major powers to enact laws concerned with Aboriginal people. But the change in the Australian mind had begun long before that. In my view, Australia's conceptions of Aboriginal people changed radically with the tragic life and death of Albert Namatjira. This remarkable man, born to an ancient artistic tradition of the Aranda people of Central Australia, had mastered the graphic techniques of European artists and was able, for the first time, to express our own people's view of nature in a way that was immediately understandable throughout the world. Namatjira's extraordinary genius led him into an impossible conflict with a world of modern Australia, a conflict which eventually caused his death. This great tragedy created a new concept of Aboriginality, not just for Australians but for all the world.

The 1967 referendum not only handed to the federal government the powers to become actively involved in Aboriginal affairs, but also provided a social impetus from which this government had created the first of the major educational provisions, the Study Grant Scheme. This was a remarkable device for its time, in that it provided unique access to tertiary education for Aboriginal people. But in retrospect one would not seriously have expected this provision to produce the changes that it did.

Aboriginal people had at this stage a dismal experience of schooling, and there would seem to be little chance of making a success of tertiary education through a scheme which provided only monetary support. By 1970 there were fewer than 100 Aboriginal people involved in tertiary education, but by 1980 there were almost 900 Aboriginal people attending a variety of tertiary institutions in this country. This remarkable change all happened during the 1970's, and what it indicated was the determination of Aboriginal people to grasp the opportunity that was presented.

During the 1970's a great deal of federal and State government funds were used to create provisions within the schooling system. It was not, however, until well into the 1980's that the schools began to react in terms of outcomes. During this period Australian educationists, both black and white, invented a new educational device which has changed not only the educational futures of Aboriginal people, but also perhaps the future nature of the Aboriginal population.

In 1979 the NITE report found that there were some 72 qualified Aboriginal teachers in Australia. Some eight years later the enclave program at James Cook University has alone produced that number of graduates from people who did not have the secondary-schooling outcomes necessary even to enter tertiary education.

The very sad and unprecedented events associated with Aboriginal suicides in recent times, and the government response, may well be the catalyst needed to break the stand off and lead to a new productive situation.

Whatever the outcomes of present events, the future will at least be different for Australia's Aboriginal society, because the immediate future society will be different. There will be two components in the society which never existed before. The first is a group of elder statesmen and women. Unlike elders of the last 200 years, these people will have known and experienced influence and indeed power in their lifetimes. The second element will be at least 1000 higher-education graduates whose empowerment is the product of that universal device - education. This second element is the direct product of the tertiary enclave programs.

Land Rights

What really has to be looked at is where the current situation of Aboriginal people is at today in Australia. If you look at that you wind up back at original dispossesion of 1788. If you wind up back there, you realise that the real answers to the black deaths in custody are the same as the real answers for the appalling Aboriginal mortality rate, the appalling Aboriginal health statistics in this country, the appalling rate of imprisonment amongst Aboriginals. All of these things can only be solved by addressing the broader issue.

The broader issues are very simple, give Aboriginal people economic independence, through Land Rights. That's what the concept of Land Rights means to me. You give a people in this type of society that surrounds us today economic independence because, I don't care what people say about the society that surrounds us today. They say it is a Christian society and that's garbage, you've only got to look at the way society operates and it is quite obvious that the basic motivating factor of this society is money.

The only way you can be free in Australia today is to be economically independent. The white man's way of doing that is as an individual. That's their way, fair enough. Our way is as communities, groups and clans. It seems to me that is what Land Rights is all about. You give grants of land, plus money, in order to help those Aboriginal people develop. To go through whatever economic development that is not in conflict with their Aboriginal values but which will be firstly labour intensive and will create employment in the community and ultimately give that community economic independence.

Once you have got a community of economically independent Aboriginal people you have got a group of people who, for the first time in 200 years, are going to be free to choose for themselves. Nobody else. No bureaucrats in Canberra. Nobody outside of that community makes decisions on behalf of that group of people.

They decide themselves and then it is entirely up to that group of people as to the direction they want to go in the future. Whatever they want to do, what they want their children to do or be, that is what Land Rights is all about and that is how you solve black deaths in custody, and the majority of all other problems that have been experienced by my people for over the past 202 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, in closing I should like to leave you with a passage from Henry Reynolds' latest book 'The Law of the Land':

> "In 1937, R.T. Latham, a prominent legal scholar, remarked that when the first settlers reached Australia;
>
> > 'their invisible and inescapable cargo of English law fell from their shoulders and attached itself to the soil on which they stood. Their personal law became the territorial law of the Colony.'
>
> It is a graphic image. What was not mentioned was that in transit from shoulder to soil the inescapable cargo struck the Aborigines such a severe blow that they have still not recovered from it. The legal profession as a whole has been remarkably reluctant to admit the role of the law in the dispossession of the Aborigines and the on-going injustices which they have been subjected to during the last two hundred years. The claim has always been that English law was blind to racial differences and that the Aborigines became subjects of the Crown from the first instance of settlement. But the facts speak for themselves. Despite coming under the protection of the common law, over 20,000 Aborigines were killed in the course of Australian settlement. They were not, in a legal sense, foreign enemies struck down in war although a few were shot down during periods of martial law. Most were murdered - nothing more nor less. Yet the law was powerless to staunch the flow of blood - and neither lawyers nor judges appear to have done much to bring the killing to an end. It is not an honourable record.
>
> There was another, and even more profound, failure of trust which still deeply influences relations between whites and Aborigines. It concerns the question of land. At the time of Australian settlement English law protected property more than it protected life itself. Private property was vigorously defended against thieves and trespassers, as well as against the prerogative power of the Crown. How, then, could Aboriginal rights be totally ignored?

English law like most other legal systems in Europe paid great respect to possession - it was 'nine points of the law' as the old legal maxim ran or as the most widely used nineteenth century legal dictionary observed, beati possedentis, 'blessed are those in possession'. "It hath been truly a custom of old" wrote J. Selden, the father of international law in England.

These are the things, the fighting and the struggle. This is still our land, we have never signed a treaty for this land, never, as far as our people are concerned, it is still our mother. We are still a native of the soil, when we die we go back there. That is where we belong. with the mother earth.

Thank you

LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

Presented by Mr. Steve Keras,
Senior Member,
Immigration Review Tribunal, Brisbane.

Mr. Steve Karas gave a general talk on law in a multicultural society and the importance of having access to specially trained legal interpreters. He also touched on matters involving immigration and its effects on legal practice. For further information regarding this paper please contact:

Mr. Steve Karas

Tel: 07-2215333

CULTURAL IDENTITY: THE REPRESENTATION OF "AUSTRALIANNESS"[1]

Michael Garbutcheon Singh

Introduction

Anyhow, what makes someone an Australian? The issue of Australian identity is an enigma. Just who is an "Australian" is the subject of widespread debates in hotels and lecture halls across the country. In Australia the fundamental metaphysical problems of humanity, expressed in such questions as "Who are we? What are we doing here?" take on a particular meaning and relevance. As Nicholas Jose (1985, p. 318) observed, these perennial philosophical questions raise anxieties in Australians because they

> are inevitably tied up with questions about national identity, and the distinctiveness of existence in Australia, as if the larger questions cannot be answered without first answering the more socially specific questions: who are we Australians, and what are we doing *here?"* (emphasis in original).

Cultural identities are not as transparent as might be first thought, but forever problematic. It is not at all evident that a group of fifty or sixty people could agree on the characteristics of what makes someone Australian (see Appendix I). It is clear that one person's "Australian", may, unfortunately, be another's racist, sexist ideologue. In this paper, I want to argue against thinking of cultural identities as a given object which the mass media merely (re)present to us through such contradictory images of the middle class urbanity of *Neighbours* and the sexist machismo of *Crocodile Dundee*. Instead, I propose that we should think of cultural identities as involving *both* "construction", *and* transformation as much as reproduction. In other words, cultural identities are never complete, but always caught in a tension between change and stability. The issues of "race" and ethnicity are central to contemporary debates about the reappraisal and re-invention of the Australian identity. The production of cultural identities is always constituted within, and not outside, media (re)presentations. This view problematises the validity to which (re)presentations of the "Australian identity" lay claim, raising questions which challenge the sincerity, truth, comprehensibility and appropriateness of its multiplicity of productions. In this paper, then, I seek to develop current socio-cultural investigations on the issue of cultural identity and, in particular, (re)presentations of "Australianness". I have appropriated and seek to extend Stuart Hall's (1989) arguments regarding "Carribean identity" and its (re)presentation in cinema, applying them to a discussion of the "Australian identity" and its multiple dimensions. In particular, the fixed, essentialist notion of cultural identity is questioned.

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[1]A paper presented to the "Intercultural Communication Skills Conference", sponsored by the Bureau of Ethnic Affairs, the National Women's Consultative Council and the Network for Intercultural Communication, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1-3 July, 1990. This paper is written against the background M. Garbutcheon Singh's research and teaching in social and cultural studies of education in the Faculty of Education, James Cook University of North Queensland, Australia. Donna Eddleston's wordprocessing of drafts of this paper is gratefully acknowledged.

"Cultural identity": A fixed essence?

Typically, "cultural identity" may be defined in terms of the idea of "one, shared culture". It is a collectively imagined sense of "one, true self". It is thought to hide inside our multiple subjectivities, under layers of other artificial identities. People are seen as having a shared history and ancestry: identity is constituted through the selective recollection of the past (Schlesinger, 1989). Within this position a sense of "Australianness" is said to reflect a common history and shared mores. These are seen as providing a sense of being "one people", with a stable continuous point of reference overriding all others social divisions and historical shifts. This "oneness" is said to underly all other differences which are dismissed as being superficial. There is claimed to be an essential and fixed truth to what it means to be Australian. It is this way of thinking about cultural identity which the media, along with school curricula are frequently urged to find, unearth, and construct through popular cultural (re)presentations.

This fixed, essentialist conception of cultural identity had an important role in the years leading up to, and following Federation. Those colonial and post-colonial struggles had a profound effect on reshaping the world view of Australians. It was central to the vision of "Australianness" constructed by the poets, Lawson and Patterson, and of the lengthy political project to replace a British colonial self-image with an Australian identity during the course of this century. It is still a powerful force in popular cultural (re)presentations, especially among people reeling at the emergence of a mass culture. In post-colonial Australia, this intrinsic, transcendental identity has been the object of passionate investigation, driven by the hope of discovering beyond the socio-economic concerns of today and the cultural cringe, a romantic and golden era which will rehabilitate us both in regard to ourselves and in terms of how we would like others to regard us. The recent Bicentennial Celebrations in Australia addressed themselves to this project for very good reasons. On the one hand, colonisation held the displaced peoples of Australia in the grip of British imperialism, and on the other, the increasing integration of Australia into a massified culture was seen as distorting, disfiguring and destroying the possibilities for an Australian identity.

The question which we need to pose is: "What is the nature of this drive to popularise a fixed and essentialist (re)presentation of 'Australianness'"? Is it simply matter of excavating that which British colonialism buried? Is it a merely matter of bringing to light the hidden continuities suppressed by the emergence of a massified culture? I want to suggest that it involves a very different practice. It is not the rediscovery of some essential "truth" that is involved, but the *production* of cultural identity in which all Australians, rather than the elite, should participate. The production of the Australian identity is an on-going, but forever incomplete process, of reassembling and juxtaposing in a novel way our collective self-image (see Morley and Robins, 1989). Cultural identity is not grounded in genealogy or archaeology, but in the telling of the past anew by each rising generation of Australian citizens.

With Hall (1989) I do not want to suggest that we should ignore the importance of the act of imaginative re-discovery involved in the production of a fixed, essentialist image of a cultural identity. It is important, not in the least because the unearthing of "hidden histories" has figured prominently in the development of important social movements such as those associated with women, Aborigines and ethnic minorities. Films such as *Lousy Little Sixpence* (1983) are a testimony to the strength of this conception of cultural identity (Moore and Muecke, 1984). Such films attempt to reconstruct the unity of a people dispersed across this continent by colonisation, transportation, displacement, and unfree labour. Such films are socially significant acts of imaginary coherence.

These efforts to produce a cultural identity are significant because their images impose an imaginary re-unification on the experience of displacement which is the shared history of all Australians. If anything, displacement is at the centre of our cultural identity. The very recent recognition of this has given the Australian identity a meaning which it lacked until recent times. No one who recalls the history of transportation, slavery and migration can fail to appreciate how displacement and the "loss of identity" have been central to the Australian experience. This rift can only begin to be reconciled when these forgotten connections are placed firmly in our sense of being Australian. Such (re)presentations of the Australian identity are necessary to restore a sense of fullness to set against a broken past. Such films are resources of resistance with which to challenge the fragmented and pathological ways in which the Aboriginal, Islander and NESB experience has been reconstructed within the dominant regimes of popular cultural (re)presentation of the Australian identity.

Cultural identities are, however, not as unproblematic as this fixed, essentialist view of what makes someone Australian would have us believe. The sections which follow show just how problematic this view really is. Second, it is argued that the construction of the Australian identity, in particular, must be reconstituted in relation to at least five important "presences". Third, it is argued there is need for an alternative conception of the Australian identity which acknowledges the centrality of "difference" in what makes someone an Australian. But first, it is argued that cultural identities are simultaneously constituted *both* by points of similarity and continuity, *and* points of difference and discontinuity.

A double dialectic: similarity/difference and continuity/discontinuity

Just for the moment let us think about **Australian identities** as being simultaneously "framed" by two axes: the axis of similarity and continuity; and the axis of difference and discontinuity (Hall, 1989, p. 72). The "Australian identity" needs to be considered in terms of an interdependent and interpenetrating relationship between these two axes. One is grounded in historical continuity, and the other axis recalls for us that what Australians share is an experience of difference and discontinuity. The convicts forced into unfree labour by transportation came predominantly, but not exclusively, from Britain, and when that "supply" of cheap labour ended, it was replenished by slave labour from the South Pacific. The paradox is that it was this transportation and slavery, and the establishment of the British colonial economy in Australia which unites these people across their differences. At the same instance, it cut them off from direct access to their different pasts. Difference is reproduced at the same time as continuity is maintained.

To return to Australia after any protracted absence is to experience a double shock of recognising both its similarity and difference, its continuity and discontinuity. On first arriving in Townsville, I "recognised" it immediately. I also saw how different Townsville is from Geelong. The difference is not merely of landscape and weather, but also a fundamental difference of culture and history. This difference does *matter*. It positions the people of Townsville and Geelong as simultaneously both the same and different. The differences between the two cities are forever changing due to different points of reference. In relation to the mass culture, for example "teenage mutant ninja turtles", they are similar. They also belong to the periphery being at the rim of metropolitan, urbane Australia. However they do not have the same relationship of marginality to the metropolitan, geo-political centres. Each city has worked out its social and economic dependency in different ways. This regional or provincial "difference" is etched into our sense of being Australia. It is these aspects of identity which make the people of North Queensland, vis-a-vis other Australians, with a similar history, different.

How, then, should the presence of this "difference" within the Australian identity be analysed? The shared history of transportation, slavery, colonisation, displacement and migration has played a significant part in shaping our collective self-image. The etching of difference in the Australian identity is also significant. This difference suggests foment and instability, as well as a lack of finality in the production of the Australian identity. This cultural identity can not be (re)presented as a simple, binary opposition. Its complexity goes beyond the dualistic structure of "inclusion/exclusion", or "past/present" or "them/us": these apparent oppositional tendencies are mutual constitutents of the Australian identity. At different places and times, in relation to different social interests, the (re)presentations of Australianness have been, and will continue to be reformulated.

Consider for a moment the way in which Townsville both *is* and *is* not Australian. Superficially, Townsville is a much richer, more "attractive" city than Geelong. In contrast, Geelong is much poorer and crisis-ridden. What is distinctive about Townsville can only be described in terms of that special supplement which the Aboriginal and Islander presence adds to the refinement and sophistication of the Australian culture. It is this Aboriginal and Islander presence which is giving rise to significant transformations in the Australian identity.

This sense of the Australian identity which incorporates "difference" challenges the fixed binaries which seek to stabilise the Australian identity and its (re)presentations. The next section shows how "Australianness" is never finished or completed, but keeps on moving to encompass additions and supplements. What gives form and function to cultural identity is "difference". Without relations of "difference", no adequate (re)presentation of "Australianness" can occur. Existing gaps and elisions in the formation of the Australian identity can no longer be ignored.

Five "presences"

With this conception of the Australian identity which recognises the interpenetration of similarity and continuity by difference and discontinuity, it is possible to reconsider the positioning of all Australians, rather than the select few. This, following Jean Martin (1978), may be done in relation to at least five "presences": the "Migrant Presence", the "Presence Aboriginal", the "Female Presence," the fourth ubiquitous "Mass Cultural Presence", and the "British Presence". These presences advance the need for a renewal and profound reappraisal of the visible ways in which the Australian identity is delimited.

The "Migrant Presence" is the site of the repressed and marginalised. It was silenced by the power of British imperialism, despite being present everywhere: on the goldfields throughout Australia, in the languages of the Queensland canefields of the late nineteenth century, in the Germanic religious practices and beliefs of the Barossa Valley, in the camps of bonded labour working in the Snowy Mountains. For too long "Migrant", the signified which was not (re)presented in the Australian identity, was an unspoken and unspeakable "presence" in Australian culture. Its "presence" was hidden by every attempt to exclude it from the dominant narratives which produced a sense of "Australianness". Today it is the "Migrant Presence" with which every (re)presentation of the Australian identity is being transformed (Cope, 1987). The impact of the post-1947 immigration program, especially since the rise of the official policy of multiculturalism, has contributed to a reconstruction of "Australianness":

> Through many small changes and decisions, an overall shift in the centre of gravity has occurred. The status of England as "onlie begetter" has been challenged by Celtic and Gaelic claims, and the primacy of the British heritage itself has been placed in a different perspective by the influx of continental influences. Even Greece and

> Rome as the wellsprings of civilization are seen to be part of a larger, variegated, non-linear story. In consequence, the patterns to be adopted by future Australian societies become less predictable and more open to experiment. It is not a move towards cultural relativism, so much as a matter of making cultural values the result of wider discrimination and choice.
>
> (Jose, 1985, p. 335)

It was only in the 1970s that the Australian identity became available to a great many Australian people, in particular, to Aborigines, Islanders and others of non-English speaking backgrounds. In this historic period many people discovered themselves to be Australians just as they acknowledged, with pride, themselves to be of non-English speaking backgrounds. This important socio-cultural reconstruction of the Australian identity, however, was not, and could not be made directly, without "mediation". It could only be made through the impact on popular life of Australia's post-colonialism, the civil rights struggles, the promotion of liberal pluralism and the work of active citizens engaged in the counter-construction of "Australianness". There is emerging a "new" Australian identity, one which is grounded in the "old". It is the inclusion of the "Migrants Presence" which has made it an important signifier of renewed interpretations of Australian identity. How we think about the "Migrant Presence" is inseparable from the question of how we think about the "Australian identity" (Carter, 1986). Everyone in Australia, of whatever ethnic background, must sooner or later come to terms with the "Migrant Presence". All of us must look the "Migrant Presence" in the face and say that this is a part of what makes someone an Australian.

I think of the second, the "Aboriginal and Islander Presence", not in terms of power, but in terms of land. Cultural identities are inherently related to space - to territory, for beyond the border it is expected that people's subjective identities will be reconstituted. Australia is the place where various cultural tributaries met. The "Aboriginal and Islander Presence" reminds us that "Terra nullius", the "empty" land (the British colonisers all but emptied it), is where strangers, nomads from every other part of the globe, met. None of these people who now occupy this island continent - African, European, American, Asian - originally "belonged" here, certainly not in the sense of Aboriginal and Islander bonding to this place. There Presence reminds us that this is a place where the creolisations and syncretisms of the Australian identity were and continue to be contested and negotiated. Australia is the site where the fateful and fatal encounter was staged between Aborigines and the British, Asians and Europeans. The "Aboriginal and Islander Presence" forces to understand the Australian identity in terms of displacements: the displacement of the original, pre-Phillip inhabitants, the Aborigines, many of whom were permanently displaced from their homelands; of peoples displaced in different ways from Africa, Asia and Europe; the displacements of slavery, colonisation and transportation. It is this Presence which stands for the ways in which Australian people have been destined to "migrate". It is the signifier of migration itself - of travelling and voyaging, and of "removal" and "clearance"; not unlike the contemporary nomad, forever moving, never bonded to a particular place. This preoccupation with movement and migration is one of Australia's key themes.

Thus I think of the "Aboriginal and Islander Presence" as itself the beginning of diversity - the beginning of what makes Australians a people of "difference". I include here Aboriginal communities whose identity is secured in relation to their sacred homelands. There is a need for a popular acknowledgement of the necessary heterogeneity in being "Australian," for a conception of the "Australian identity" which lives with and through "difference". The Australian identity is continually being produced anew, through the transformations borne of difference. One can only think here of what is uniquely Australian as the mix of languages, the array of colour and the "blends" of flavours in the diverse Australian cuisine.

The "Female Presence", the third presence in the identity equation, has not been reflected in the Australian identity. Despite this the Australian identity has influenced women's lives considerably. The "Australian identity" is equally a statement of exclusion as it is of inclusion. The Australian national identity is gender biased, it is constructed as masculine to the exclusion of women. Neither women nor the women's movement, in its many forms, have been seen as part of the Australian identity. We need to ask what is the relevance of dominant (re)presentations of the Australian identity for women? We need to search extensively to find some suggestion that women too are part of this cultural identity. Women are absent from popular definitions of the Australian identity, their experiences and contributions rendered invisible. Thus, the Australian identity provides a collective self-image with which only half the population can fully identify. What does this mean for Australian women - especially for Aboriginal, Islander and non-English speaking background women?

The very definition of the Australian identity has been so tied-up with masculinity that it has been virtually impossible for women to play a real part in its production. At the same time as efforts are made to persuade us to consent to popular (re)presentations of "Australianness", differences, silences and conflict are overridden. But despite this the Australian identity has moved beyond being a masculinist project to a commercial enterprise, the Australian identity has been crudely packaged as a business. What are the unique characteristics of the Australian identity: gambling, mateship, beer drinking, militarism, playing sport (or just watching it) or flag waving? But do not these images ignore or denigrate women? Think for a moment about hotels:

> Hotels loom large in both everyday and academic thinking about masculinity and mateship in Australia... In these cultural representations, the feature of hotels which is stressed is the exclusion of women... Popular imagery and stereotyping views of hotels as male domains tend to overlook the regular presence of women in bars, both as workers and customers...it draws upon the still strong cultural sentiment or ideology that the national [sic] and proper place for women is in the domestic sphere.
>
> (Grimes, 1985, pp. 66-67)

What of the fourth, and perhaps most troubling term in the identity equation, the "Mass Cultural Presence"? Does not the rise of mass culture threaten aspirations for a cultural identity with global homogeneity? The rise of a mass culture is a challenge to the construction of an Australian identity, as well as an assault on people's ability to engage in critical thought. What of the impact of the consumption of mass culture on the Australian identity? We all know the ease with which the Australian identity is conscripted to serve the interests of multinational profit-making, tugging at our heart strings to force open our purse strings. Mass cultural forms have colonised the social space available to people for reading, talking, recreation and sport (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1986). Far from constructing an Australian cultural identity, variety television and popular music have disseminated mass entertainment, undermining the capacity of Australians to produce their own cultural identity. Think, for example, of the dialogue of every Australia films such as *Crocodile Dundee* with the dominant cinemas of the United States of America. Who could describe this tensed and tortured dialogue as a "one way trip"? A mass culture is now manufactured, and colonising the consciousness of Australians. Although unstable, the Australian identity is double-edged, at once being projected in a dominating, Anglo-dependent form, but simultaneously struggling to oppose mass cultural dominance.

Many Australians live for mass cultural activities - the spectacle of banale television shows, rock concerts, and record parties. Mass cultural forms have colonised the leisure time activities of Australian youth. Most of us are involved in the consumption rather than production of culture: "fast foods", supermarket chains; "holiday packaging" and soft drinks. The spectacle of the mass culture takes on the appearance

of the real world, while participation in a non-media reality is seen as fiction. Radio, television, records and spectator sports divert public attention from the "real world", leaving in place questionable aspects of the existing social order. Of course, there are moments of resistance, but this requires the most complex of cultural strategies. Efforts are being made to penetrate and deconstruct the spectacle of mass cultural forms. People are engaging in the critical interrogation of variety TV programs, the analysis of popular music, and careful scrutiny of films that are manufactured as part of a mass culture. There is a need to recognise the impact of the mass culture on the Australian identity, so that it may be subjected to critiqued and changed if need be, and to discover the more enlightened aspects latent within it. We can no longer be indifferent to these mass cultural forms, but must examine their influence on the Australian identity as a matter of major importance. But are the problematic pleasures and spurious satisfactions found in mass cultural activities a substitute for our alienated existence and unrelieved frustrations with everyday life? The Australian identity is grounded in the ubiquitous mass cultural presence which is built on consumption and spectacle.

What of the "British Presence", the fifth term in the identity equation? For many, this is not an issue of scarcity, but of an over-abundant plentitude. Where the "Migrant Presence" was a case of the unspoken, the "British Presence" has for a long time been a case of that which speaks about itself endlessly, and endlessly speaks about "Others". The "British Presence" disrupts the innocence of the discourse of "Australian identity" by reinstating the issue of power. Irrevocably, the "British Presence" belongs to the question of power relations, to issues of coercion and acquiescence. It is the dominant presence in Australian culture. In terms of colonialism, displacement, sexism and racism, the "British Imperial Presence" has positioned the Presence of others outside the dominant regimes of (re)presentation of the Australian identity.

Clearly, it is important to conceptualise this "British Presence" in terms of power. However, it is a mistake to situate that power as being external to us. It is not "an extrinsic force whose influence can be thrown off like the serpent sheds its skin" (Hall, 1989, p. 78). What we need to remember is that power is inside, as well as outside ourselves. The "British Presence" fixes the Other not only by its hostility, aggression and violence, but in the ambiguity and ambivalence of its desirability. In recognising this we have to directly confront the dominating "British Presence" as the site of Anglo-dependent assimilation where those other presences which it has excluded were reconstituted. They were reframed and put together in a new way. But more than this, it is "the site of a profound splitting and doubling" (Hall, 1989, p. 78): the ambivalence of identification with a racist ideology. The "Otherness" of the self is reinscribed in the British Presence.

But can it still be claimed that Britain is the *origin* of our identities, unchanged by two hundred years of displacement, and transportation. Could we in any literal sense, return to this source? The original home of the convicts is no longer there. It too has been transformed. We are now further from such British "origins" than our phobia of geographic distance would suggest. History is, in that sense, irreversible. We must not collude with that view which "normalises" and appropriates the "British Presence" by freezing it into some timeless zone of an "unchanging past". We must recognise that it intensifies our sense of diversity by dramatising the difference between the presence of others and the far away islands of Britain. While this "British Presence" is a necessary part of the imagining of "Australianness", we can not literally return to it. The questions we now face are: how can we stage this dialogue so that we can place this "British Presence" without fear, rather than being forever placed by it? Can we ever recognise its influence, whilst resisting its imperialising eye? Perhaps this problem is impossible to resolve.

The "dialogue of power and resistance, of refusal and recognition" (Hall, 1989, p. 78), with and against the "British Presence" is a complex dimension of "Australianness". Today the "British Presence" is fused and syncretised with other cultural elements whether they be Aboriginal, Asian or European, to give a creolised form to the Australian identity. This is an ever-present feature of "Australianness", the traversing and intersecting of our cultural identity at every point by "race" and ethnicity. Thus, in terms of popular cultural life, "Australianness" is nowhere to be found in a pure, pristine state. This suggests that we need a dynamic view of cultural identity which is redefined and reconstituted in and through these different Presences. The Australian identity can no longer be constructed around (re)presentations which systematically exclude the Aboriginal, Migrant and Female Presences, as it has done in the past.

"Cultural identity": A social and historical construction

It should be clear that there are different ways of thinking about cultural identities. The view of the Australian identity for which I have argued in this paper is much less familiar, and is perhaps somewhat unsettling. Its boundaries are undefined, our sense of inclusion/exclusion is disturbed, and our sense of its essence or fixity has disintegrated. Clearly, we must consider the social and historical formation of cultural identities further.

Of course, the view of "cultural identity" presented here challenges, but does not replace the fixed, essentialist view addressed in the first section of this paper. However, this alternative position acknowledges that, as well as numerous points of similarity, there are also important points of significant difference which constitute "what we really are", and "what we have become". We cannot talk for long with any speciality about "the one true Australian identity", without recognising its other dimension - the differences, the diversity and discontinuities which constitute the Australian "uniqueness". Cultural identity, in this sense, is, as Hall (1989) argues, a matter of "becoming" as well as of "being": an act of producing, and not just a finished product. It belongs to the productive work of future generations as much as it has to the constructions of "Australianness" (re)presented by present and past generations. It is not something which already exists, it does not transcend place or time. Cultural identities are produced in particular places and they have histories which reveal the way they have been transformed in the process of their reproduction. Like everything which is historical, cultural identities undergo constant transformation from generation to generation. The "Australian identity" is not fixed fast for eternity in some essential truths from the past, but is subject to on-going cultural changes and social (power) struggles. The "Australian identity" is not to be found through the "recovery" of past truths. It is not just waiting to be found, and it can not guarantee forever our collective sense of identity forever.

From this second position we are better able to appreciate the traumatic nature of "the colonial experience". The ways convicts, women, Aborigines and Asians were positioned in the dominant regime of (re)presentation of "Australianness" were an important exercise of power and knowledge. These (re)presentations had the power to make Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, and those of non-English speaking backgrounds as "Other" than Australians. For too long "Australian" has been the name given to the different ways in which too few people have been positioned by, and position themselves within, the narratives of the past. Others have been excluded from such positions and, therefore, denied the opportunity to call themselves Australians. However, it is one thing to place some people as the "Other" of a dominant discourse, but it is quite another thing to subject them to that exclusionary "knowledge". This was not only a matter of externally imposed Anglo-dependent will and domination, but involved the power of internal self-compulsion and subjective conformation to the dominant regime of (re)presentation of "Australianness".

This exclusion of the Migrant, Aboriginal and Islander Presences, along with others, has crippled and deformed the Australian identity. If its tradition of selective silences are not resisted, it will continue to produce stateless, individuals without either an anchor or a horizon. The inclusion of these Presences changes and challenges dominant regimes of (re)presentation of what the "Australian identity" is. From this perspective, the Australian identity is not a fixed "essence" which is complete in itself. It is not immutable nor does it exist outside history or culture. It is not a universal, transcendental spirit which lives inside some, rather it is marked by fundamental social changes. It is not once-and-for-all, nor does it have a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute Return (Hall, 1989). Of course, it is not a mere conjuring trick or a flight of fantasy. It has its histories which reveal its material and ideological effects. While the past does speak to us, it is not merely factual "past" we hear. It is always a "past" reconstructed through fantasy, nostalgia, legend and stories. The Australian identity is an unstable point connecting citizens and the nation-state and not a guaranteed unproblematic, transcendental "law of history". It is not a fixed essence but a *positioning*, and this is always political, a matter of power relationships. It is a matter of the power all people have to define the Australian identity, and the power they have to popularise these (re)presentations through control of the institutions of cultural production. It is a matter of the power of Aboriginal, Islander and other citizens of non-English speaking backgrounds to select particular values for institutionalisation in contemporary traditions. As Morley and Robins state (1989, p. 17), the "question is whether ethnic (and also gendered) differences are disavowed and repressed, or whether they can be accepted, and accepted, moreover, in their difference".

Australian cultural practitioners and critics of Aboriginal, Islander and other non-English speaking backgrounds are increasingly coming to recognise and explore their participation in the production of the Australian identity. Across a range of popular cultural forms there is a dynamic and critical appropriation of aspects of the dominant fixed, essentialist (re)presentations. These are being deconstructed and new signs and symbolic meanings are leading to the production of a new sense of "Australianness". The force of this tendency is most evident at the level of language where community languages, creoles, and Black English "decentre, destabilise and carnivalise the linguistic domination of English" (Hall, 1989, p. 80).

It it because the Australia identity is constituted by a narrative of displacement that it gives rise to the desire to return to England, Europe, Asia or outstations in the Northern Territory. This "return to lost origins" can not be fulfilled nor requitted. However, these origins are the source of the infinitely renewable desires, memories, and myths needed for the on-going production of the Australian identity. In short, these origins are a rich reservoir of diverse narratives from which all of us can engage in producing what it means to be Australian. Through contemporary society runs the awareness that ossified notions of what constitutes "Australianness" are no longer adequate:

> A rural Eden, a prison house, a desert of spiritual mortification, an egalitarian utopia, a poor imitation of Europe, an Anglo-Saxon or white last stand, a place of unfettered exuberance and inventiveness, a place of suburban conformity: it was, and is, all of these things and none of them. Important writers do not merely reflect their society but create anew, discovering fresh images and conceptions of its meaning. Yet if earlier generations have labored to forge certain ideas of Australia, the current generation of writers seems impelled to displace itself once again by looking ironically at the mythic ways in which Australia has been imagined.
>
> (Jose, 1984, p. 334)

Conclusion

In this paper I have put forward a different way of conceptualising the Australian identity based on the arguments of Stuart Hall (1989). I have spoken of "Australianness" as socially and historically constructed. Popular constructions of the Australian identity are not mirrors which merely reflect what exists, but are forms of cultural production which constitute for us as new interpretations of our collective subjectivity. I have suggested new points of departure for the future production of a democratised Australian identity. They will enable us to produce new images of who we are.

The Australian identity is distinguished by the forms of (re)presentation in which it is collectively imagined. Popular (re)presentations of the "Australian identity" need to recognise the differences and diverse histories which enable all Australians, rather than a select few, to construct points of identification. We can no longer be content with undertaking historical investigation in the hope of finding an already made sense of identity. We must challenge the belief that it is possible to discover a "true" or essential "Australianness" by delving into the past. The "Australian identity" is produced and reproduced through the efforts made by all the people of Australia, and not the privileged few. It production involves an effort to describe, justify and praise the actions through which all these people struggle to achieve a more hospitable, socially just and more amicable society.

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APPENDIX I

What makes an Australian?
"Presences" in the Perspectives of Conference Participants

How would you have analysed participant's (re)presentations of the Australian identity?

The Aboriginal (and Islander?) Presence

. I am not Australian. I am an Aboriginal Australian.

. Identifying as an Aborigine.

. Aborigines

. To be born here

The British presence

. Speak 'English' with an Australian accent

. Respect for the flag

A gendered presence

. Someone who identifies him/herself as "Australian"

. Mateship

. *Neighbours*, Kylie and Jason, Opera House, Joan Sutherland, *Crocodile Dundee*, Paul Hogan

The mass cultural presence

. Someone who supports Australia in sport

. "Footballs, meat pies, kangaroos, Holden cars"

. To want the 1996 Olympics to be in Melbourne

. Someone who calls Australia home (apologies to Peter Allen)

. Winning - cricket, football, etc.

The Migrant Presence

. Multicultural personality

. Joseph's "coat of many colours"

. Many cultural faces

. better acceptability of other cultures

. Diversity

. There is not one country in the world where migration has not made some impact, eg., England, etc.

. Multicultural

. Living with difference (but not necessarily accepting difference)

The Enlightenment presence?

. Sense of freedom

. Freedom of speech, the press

. The ability to express one's self without retribution

. Take for granted freedom

. Voice opinions

. 'Knockers'/criticise others different from ourselves

. Freedom of choice within Australia, expression.

. No wars and/or conflicts

. Fair go, She'll be right

. Expectation of freedom

. Freedom of thought, speech, justice

A hedonistic presence, perhaps?

. Healthy lifestyle - food, accommodation, etc

. Open, plenty of room

. I like sunshine and spaces

. Lots of living space

. Puts "ie" onto the ends of words, eg., Barbie, Chrissie

. Enjoys outdoor life, public holidays

. Low emphasis on class distinction

. Easy going

- Informality, informal society, more relaxed, social protocol
- Ability to laugh at themselves
- Different or have a sense of humour
- Able to drink half a dozen stubbies of beer in half hour.
- Wears shorts and T-shirt.
- unique lifestyle
- "Laid-back" attitude
- Says 'G' Day
- Sunshine, Vegemite, Barbecues (Fourex)
- Beach, blond, tan, surf
- Stubbies, singlets and thongs
- Koalas and Kangaroos, gumtrees, Qantas, Holden, talk 'STRINE'
- Living in Australia permanently
- Soul stirred by uniqueness of Australian environment
- Our own language - slang
- adaptability and flexibility

The nation-state presence?

- Someone who was born here and has a commitment to Australia
- If Australia was in conflict with another nation a person who would support Australia
- A person who feels that Australia is home
- When you have a 'lump in your throat' when Australia has some achievement
- Have best interest of country at heart
- Be naturalised, sign of commitment
- Identification as 'an Australian'?
- Desire to be one
- Pride in Australia
- Commitment to Australia as a country
- One who is born here or been naturalised or lives here permanently.
- One who has a commitment to Australia.
- Someone who feels Australian when overseas.
- If you identify yourself as an Australian - you are one.
- Advance Australia Fair, green and gold, Waltzing Matilda
- Sense of 'coming home' (after overseas)
- Sense of being Australian, but difficult to articulate.
- Desire to be here
- Being a citizen
- Someone who lives in Australia (not necessarily everyone) (not tourists, visiting overseas students)
- we live here by choice
- national pride - commitment to Australia

REMOTE AND RURAL ISSUES

Presented by Ms Margaret Jones,
Social Worker, Community Health Services,
Ayr, Q 4807

My name is Margaret Jones. I am a Social Worker with the Queensland State Department of Health, Division of Community Medicine, known as Community Health. I have worked in the Burdekin District for two years and three months as a sole, rural Social Worker in the area. For one and a half years I ran the Community Health Centre alone until a Nurse was employed. As in most rural positions the workload has been heavy and varied.

In general in rural areas I have dealt with the following issues:

i) social isolation
ii) difficulty accessing mainstream services
iii) transport problems
iv) lack of adequate and appropriate resources needed to meet the varied problems of the rural population.

These and others are pertinent to the ethnic groups residing in the Burdekin. The Burdekin is situated 88kms South of Townsville. Service planners and policy makers often consider this fortunate as they presume that residents can access services in the city, however, transport is a problem. This often means the area is under serviced or has to share services.

I have been asked to give a short paper on remote and rural issues affecting the ethnic population. As this is a broad subject I have chosen to focus on two areas, that is access to services by the elderly.

During this paper I refer to Ethnics, by this I mean people of non-English speaking background excluding Aborigines.

As I have said I work in the Burdekin District which has approximately 54.2% of its population who are Ethnic residents. The main ethnic groups consist of Italian, Sicilian, Greek and Spanish, many of whom have been in the district for a quarter of a century or more. The economic production in the Burdekin is that of cane sugar and many of the ethnics in the area have been involved in this industry since the beginning when cane was cut by hand.

Even though many ethnic residents have been in the community a long time there has only been partial integration into the mainstream, where access to services can be obtained. In general the various ethnic groups tend to stay in their own cliques and rely on family and peers for support and maintenance of needs. Family and peers are not readily available in the form of the

extended family as believed.

In September 1989, a working party was established in the Burdekin to explore the needs of the Ethnic Aged. This party is made up of local service providers e.g. Community Health, local associations, Blue Nurses, Home Help and representatives from local ethnic groups. These parties are co-ordinated local service providers. I co-ordinate our local working party. The aim of the working parties is to identify the needs of the local communities by consultation with service providers and ethnic groups. This is to be followed up by the development of strategies to attempt to meet the needs identified.

There have been quite a few issues identified as a result of the work of the working party. I am concentrating on access to services in this paper.

Carers of the ethnic aged at home, and mainstream service providers have expressed their concerns (through the working party) at the difficulties in accessing mainstream services for the frail aged. Many aged persons prefer to go without services rather than go through the frustration of accessing inappropriate services. Their dependency is on their families to provide care which mainstream services provide for most other Australians. Children, of the elderly, who are often the carers have formed a new belief and value system many of them being Australian born. This presents a conflict between expected traditional caring of the aged parents by their children and the new life-style of the children.

Most of the aged keep hoping, believing and pressuring their children to care for them in their own homes. The nursing home placement is an unacceptable alternative to the aged. This in turn snowballs the stress and problems experienced by ethnic families.

In the Burdekin District the prospect of placement for the elderly ethnic residents who have children near them can be very traumatic. Slowly there has gathered a few residents in the local nursing home. If there is no option but to place the elderly relative in nursing home or hostel care then this transition can sometimes be made easier when they see a familiar face or their mother tongue is spoken to them.

Inability to communicate with mainstream service providers constitutes a major obstacle to access and equity for the ethnic aged. This disability not only affects the at-risk and frail aged person, also the younger and fitter aged person. Often English is the second language of the elderly and as the ageing process progresses it seems that the older person regresses to using their primary language. This seems to be especially so in the area of dementias.

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We had a lady at the Respite Care Centre in Ayr who regressed to using her primary language of Italian as her dementia worsened. This made communication doubly difficult. Thus touching, pointing, reassurance without using words becomes the main vehicle of communication.

Language problems go deeper than simply not speaking the same language, not denying this causes considerable problems. Along with this, comprehension at a level that is acceptable to migrants is a difficulty. Factors such as educational background, the use of colloquial or jargon language creates further blocks to successful communication.

It is worth noting that when issues become deep, personal and emotional there is a need for those who are fluent in English to communicate in their mother tongue.

In the Burdekin District we are currently constructing a volunteer register of people who are bilingual and willing to act as interpreters for service providers. This is not a total solution but a move to improve service delivery to migrants. The total number of ethnic aged who do not speak English well or not at all is approximately 46%. There are also plans to convert more literature, information and resources into multi-lingual editions. There has also been suggestions for service providers to take language classes.

In general, attitudes are very influential in creating blocks when ethnic aged persons attempt to access services. Xenophobia and presumptions of when in Rome, do what the Romans do by service providers means a lack of sensitivity and awareness which creates a "blame the victim" ethos. In all fairness the problem is not due entirely to attitudes of service providers. Little provision has been made in worker training to deal with multicultural issues, something slowly changing. Unless one has experience with multicultural communities, it is difficult to tackle some of the problems, let alone devise a program to meet the needs of the local community.

The working party has slowly begun to look at needs in the Burdekin District. The main one being access which is the one I have spoken on briefly this afternoon. The most significant result has been the successful submission to Home and Community Care Program for funding for H.A.C.C. Ethnic Access Liaison Project (H.E.L.P.) This project will provide a mechanism by which the ethnic aged and younger disabled can access mainstream services more effectively and where appropriate develop special services for specific groups and individuals. The Burdekin will have a bilingual case manager employed part-time whose role will be -

1. Liaise with clients and carers and refer to mainstream services where appropriate.
2. Maintain regular contact or monitor clients where necessary.

3. Assist service providers in determining needs e.g. act as interpreter or have input into cultural needs.
4. Provide appropriate information to ethnic communities.
5. Work with local parties to address the needs of the ethnic elderly.

These are a few examples. This will hopefully serve to open up access to the mainstream services for the ethnic elderly.

It is worthwhile noting that compounding the problems associated with the ethnic aged accessing mainstream services in Burdekin District is its rural nature. Regardless of access the number of services for ethnics and anglo-saxon residents is extremely limited. The most advanced service available for the ethnic aged is a local interpreter who provides this service for the Department of Social Security which visits the area for one day per week. This is the case with many services.

Social isolation is also a contributing factor to access and equity problems. There are many elderly who live considerable distances from services on farms. It is not always possible to bring those services to the people. It is also often difficult to persuade the elderly to leave the sense of security they have on their farm.

Another issue worth noting is that often there is considerable distrust of government services by the ethnic population. They have the belief that utilizing a government service gives that service the right to access private and confidential information. This distrust is often more considerable of visiting services.

To therefore increase access to services there needs to be the following:-

- Linguistically appropriate services and programs
- Culturally appropriate services and programes
- Appropriate consultative and participating processes
- Appropriate training strategies
- Ethno-specific provisions

They are as outlined in the "Aged Care Policy" for a Multicultural Society. These together with the employment of ethnic aged co-ordinating personnel in a range of Government and non-Government organisations and a flexibility to the changing needs of the ethnic elderly i.e. more initiatives like the H.A.C.C. Ethnic Liaison Project mentioned previously will begin to change the access problem.

REFERENCES:

1. Aged Care Policy for a Multicultural Society
2. Bureau of Statistics

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS CONFERENCE 1st - 3rd July 1990

held at James Cook University Townsville

by Migrant Resource Centre in Townsville

REPORT ON "REMOTE AND RURAL ISSUES" - by Mrs Noni Sipos - President of Mount Isa Ethnic Community Council

REMOTE AND RURAL ISSUES

Migrant input into Mount Isa

A high percentage of Mount Isans come from recent migrant backgrounds. I am no exception. My background is French Ruguenot, German, Polish, Jewish - a second generation Australian on my paternal side and a sixth generation of Irish, English, French background on my maternal side.

My earliest Australian ancestors were not exactly "Immigrants" - they came to Australia in 1792 as unwilling "guests of the Crown", Through my marriage and our children's marriages I have added - Hungarian, with its Tibetan, Mongonlian and Turkish inclusions, Scottish, Austrian, Welsh and Thia - and as many religions - making us a truly Multicultural family.

Early childhood years were spent in Dimbulah, then a new tobacco farming area with a huge input of immigrants who were mainly from Europe. There were a few Chinese descendants from the Gold Rush days.

During the 1940's war evacuation took our family to the German farming settlement of the Rosevale district west of Brisbane. The majority of the settlers there had become Australian citizens, so they were not interned - including our relatives.

The rest of my school years were spent in multicultural West End Brisbane, so I guess, with my multicultural background, it was inevitable that I would marry someone of a similar background. I married a Hungarian man who had recently arrived from Europe through Switzerland and was at that time working copper "shows" in the Mount Isa district.

The multicultural community culture of Mount Isa suited us both and we chose to make our home here.

Mount Isa has been a multicultural city since its earliest beginnings when people from other countries were attracted to the job opportunities available.

The first recorded immigrant workers from a non-english-speaking background were some Finnish miners working south of Cloncurry. In 1929 - a few years after John Campbell Miles first discovered the rich ore deposits along the Leichardt River, and before mining had begun - men from Finland - then working at the North Queensland cane fields - were attracted to Mount Isa by the higher wages to be offered.

Compatriots were sent for and families started to arrive in the 1920's. By 1930 a combined Finnish/Estonian Club had been formed, a Finnish Language library set up, and socials were being held at existing halls. The socials were popular with Australians as well as other nationalities. The pattern for our future title of "Model Multicultural City" was set. Funds were set aside for a headstone for any Finnish person to be buried in the local cemetery. This custom is still in existance.

Life in the thirties was very hard, especially so in Mount Isa. Heat, the never-ending dust storms and shortage of water was a constant nuisance, making life eepecially difficult for the Finnish people who came from such an extremely different climate.

Their womenfolk did not give in easily. They helped with the family income by running boarding houses, washing and cooking for men who were working on a three shift basis and needing clean clothing at all hours of the day or night. There was no time to learn english - even if a teacher had been available.

Traditional saunas were built by Finnish residents and local people thought the steam baths off hot stones a bit exotic, when everyone was sweltering in the average 38 - 40 degree heat of the day. The idea did catch on however, and today many non-Finnish homes have a sauna.

During the 1940's war the people from Finland became "enemies" and were interned. Mount Isa Mines declared that the mine would close without their Finnish miners, so the Government of the day not only relented and allowed the company to take responsibility for the Finns, but thought it a good opportunity to bring additional groups of Finns and Albanians from southern Prisoner-of-War camps.

After the war many of these stayed on with the company and were amongst the first to build non-company houses of a good standard. An unofficial building co-op was formed with the men putting money and labour into one house, then another, and so on. I don't know how the priority was set, but do know that the houses were well built and are still considered a good buy today.

With another big intake of Finnish migrants in the early 60's and 70's, Mount Isa became the scene of the largest Finnish community in Australia. Of all the national groups in Mount Isa, the Finns are considered the oldest, quietest, most clanish and most respected in the community. Their clanishness, however, does not prevent them from becoming involved with the rest of the community. Many Finns own th their own business, or are employed in Government work and other local work as well as Mount Isa Mines as foremen and shift bosses, as well as in mining.

Cultural, academic and sporting achievements are high amongst the Finns. They and their descendants have won medals and championships in Queensland and Australia.

The intake of Finnish migrants today is very low - possibly affected by the present points system or to a good economy in Finland. Many second, third and even fourth generations still live in Mount Isa, and help to contribute to the "model" city image for intercultural relationships - a standard set by the Finns and carried on by most other national groups who settled here following the aftermath of the 1940's war.

Self help was the key to good relationships - not only did each national group help their own kind, but for example, in the street in Mount Isa, such as the one in which I came to live in during the sixties, you would find Finns, Hungarians, Scots, Jugoslavs, Swiss, Austrian, English, Czechoslovakians, French, Spanish, Italins, and yes, one or two Australiens all living in comparative harmony, assisting each other with the chores of house building.

Where else but in Mount Isa, would you find an Irish Pipe Band with a Scottish Pipe Major leading the German parade for the annual Oktoberfest, playing Irish and Scottish melodies, with a German Brass Band bringing up the rear, and then playing for the official opening of the Festival. Or a choir of Finns, Hungarian, Latvian-Welsh, Scottish, Polish, German, French, Irish, Filipino and Australians all dressing up in any national costume that fits, and singing each other's national songs in their native tongue and in english.

With our present migrant intake favouring wives of established community members, it is to be hoped that the current trend for welfare dominated assistance does not discourage this particular group from following the example set by our early immigrants in self help, support and good intercultural relationships that go to make Mount Isa the example cosmopolitan city it is.

Welfare, I feel, with its sometimes nagative aspect, should only be used as a last resort when all else has failed - not a way of life - for it is only through self help and achievement that we are able to grow and mature to our fullest potential.

HISTORY OF MOUNT ISA MINES AND CITY

Mount Isa Mine orebody was discovered in 1923 by a prospector - John Campbell Miles.

After a lenghy struggle to become established, it has become one of the largest underground mines in the world.

It is the biggest single producer of silver and lead, and amongst the top ten producers of copper and zinc.

Mount Isa Mines is one of the few areas in the world where the four minerals - copper, lead, zinc and silver are mined in close proximity. Extending to a depth of 1.100 metres, the mine produces a daily output of 35,000 tons of ore.

The largest shaft descends to more than 1,000 meters, and can carry 180 men in a double-decker cage at the time.

The Mine and City lies sprawled amidst eroded red, pink and ochre-coloured hills covered with a spattering of golden green spiny needle-like leafed spinifex greas.

The Mount Isa minicipal area reaches as far as Camooweal, which is actually a suburb of Mount Isa, giving Mount Isa a main street of 188 kilometers, joining these two communities, and according to the Guinness Book of Records, making Mount Isa the largest city in the world in area.

Mount Isa was declared a city in 1967 - four years after the shire of Mount Isa was formed from the Cloncurry and Barkly Shires.

The City is 594 Kilometers by road to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and by road to Townsville 915 Kilometers. The nearest capital city is Adelaide, and we are nearer to New Guinea than Brisbane.

Mount Isa's maximum recorded rainfall (1950) was 870.4 mm. The average rainfall per year since 1926 was 390mm, and the minimum yearly rainfall was recorded in 1970 at 105.6 mm.

Summer temperatures - maximum average range - 35 - 40° C. Minimum average range - 20 - 25°C.

Winter maximum average range 20 - 25°C. Minimum average range 5 - 10°C., and has been known to drop to 5°C below zero.

Present population is about 25,000.
Height of the Lead Smelter Stack - 270 meters.
Length of underground openings - approximately 465 Kilometers.
Total length of mine workings 4.4 Kilometers long.
Width 1.2 Kilometers. Depth 1.24 Kilometers.
Length of underground railways 133 Kilometers.
There are workshops underground where vehicles are maintained and crib rooms which can seat over 200 people.
About 5,000 people are employed including about 315 apprentices.
About 42% of the workforce is married.
Approximately sixty different nationalities are employed.
Australians head the list of employees including 125 of aboriginal descent, six of whom are on the staff.
English born workers are next, followed by New Zealanders.
Finnish, German and other nationalities range from 84 in number to ones and twos.

MOUNT ISA ETHNIC COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INCORPORATED

The Mount Isa Ethnic Community Council was formed in 1977. The then newly-formed Community Advice and Information Centre saw the need for a separate specialised service for the many ethnic groups living in Mount Isa.

Language problems among many of the women had created a dependency on husbands or children for communication outside the home.

Volunteers for "Home Tutoring" classes in english language were organised. T.A.F.E. College was encouraged to conduct an advanced course in english for migrants.

A voluntary Translation and Interpreter service was introduced. Informal ethnic language classes were conducted in primary schools to help children feel comfortable with another culture and children from other cultures were made to feel comfortable with their particular cultural backgrounds.

Ethnic groups were assisted to form dance, choir and craft groups so as to preserve the skills of their cultural heritage for the enjoyment of all the community.

Information from State and Federal Government departments of special concern to migrants was able to be distributed to migrant member contacts and when necessary was translated into relevant languages.

The Ethnic Council was able to help migrants in emergency situations by directing the clients to the appropriate advisory or funding bodies.

One of our aims was to promote and foster citizenship, one small contribution, to make newly naturalised citizens feel welcome, was the presentation at Naturalisation Ceremonies of a "Tussie Mussie" - a small posie of fresh herbs and flowers with a special message, in this case, one of welcome and good wishes for their future in Australia, and presented by children in ethnic costume.

Because many of our ethnic groups are small in number, the Ethnic Council fulfills the role of the extended family.

Most of these introductions are still in force. We did have, for many years, the services of "Grant-in-Aid" funding, which was, unfortunately, not renewed, so the Centre carried on with volunteer help.

We operate from a very small rent-free office through the courtesy of the Mount Isa City Council, and are funded at present by an "Access and Equity" Grant from the Department of the Prime Minister's Cabinet, through the Planning Department.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT ARE:-

1 - To increase accessability of mainstream funding to benefit people of non-english speaking background.

2 - To ensure equity and access to resources and provision of services.

3 - To investigate barriers to access and actively engage strategies to decrease such equities.

4 - To structure consultation and exchange of information to lead to more equitable distribution of funding and services.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Employment

Mount Isa Mines is the major employer here and has a percentage of 23.94 of migrants in the workforce.

Three other contracting companies to Mount Isa Mines employ almost 100% migrant labour.

Most other employers in the city have a good percentage of migrants in their workforce - including Government departments.

M.I.M. assistance with Housing

The Company assists employees with a low interest long-term housing deposit loan.

Company flats are two bedroom only.

Fully serviced barracks are available for single men.
Dining room facilities are available at a very reasonable cost.

Company houses are available for executive staff only.
There is some transit housing available.

Other Company Assistance

Personnel Field Officer for counselling services.

Bi-Annual return air fares to Brisbane for employees and their immediate families.

Assistance with approved Community Projects.
e.g. Inclusion of Ethnic Community in Christmas programme.

Domestic Violence in the migrant community

Reported cases of domestic violence here is very low - six cases in six months. Two people needed some medical assistance. Three people sought emergency shelter accommodation.

AMENITIES AVAILABLE IN MOUNT ISA

* **Schools**

Catholic Primary	2
State Primary	6
Catholic High	1
State High	6
Special	1
Assembly of God	1
School of the Air	1
Pre-schools	7
Kindergartens	5
Child Care Centres	3
Family Day Care	1

* **Adult Education**

T.A.F.E. College - english for migrants of under five year duration

* **Health Services**

Medical	1 General Hospital with maternity, casualty and clinic facilities available 1 Private hospital, including maternity 5 Private medical practitioners
Dental Clinics	6 Private 4 School based 1 Hospital based
Other	1 Handicapped Activity Therapy Centre 1 City Council Immunisation Clinic Blue Nursing Service Health Insurance Offices Aged persons' Home Psychiatrist Rehabilitation officer Alcohol and Drug dependence officer Royal Flying Doctor Base Pathology Officers School Health Nurse Community Health Nurse Child Health Nurse 2 Optometrists Physiotherapy services Vetinary surgeons

Aboriginal and Islander services 17

* Legal Services

Public Trust Office
Legal Aid Solicitors 2
Private 5

* Migrant Assistance

Mount Isa Ethnic Community Council Incorporated

* Clubs

Of various types 200

* Churches

Of various denominations 20

* Shops

Main shopping centres -
K Mart, Coles & Woolworths
Smaller centres 8
Good variety of other specialised shopping facilities

* Accommodation

Caravan parks 8
Hotels 3
Hotel/Motel 2
Lodge type accom. 6
Youth Hostel 1
Backpackers 1
Resturants 12
Motels 8
Hostels for emergency or short-term accommodation
Mount Isa 6
Camooweal 2

* Tours

Mount Isa Mines Surface Tours
" " " Underground Tours
Mount Isa City sight-seeing tours
Bush Tours
Helicopter Joy Flights

In surrounding areas:-
Riversleigh Fossil area
Gunpowder Resort
Lake Julius Dam with accommodation
Mineral fossicking
Water holes
Aboriginal paintings
Ghost towns - Mary Kathleen
Ballara

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Late last year the Mount Isa Ethnic Community Council Incorporated, was invited by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, through the Settlement Planning Branch, to participate in implementing a Pilot Access and Equity Project, to accelerate more equitable access of Ethnic Community organisations, to mainstream Commonwealth and State funding progress.

The object of the project is to ensure that all groups within the Australian community receive their fair entitlement of community-wide services, thereby also diminishing undue dependence and eccessive demand on the migrant settlement services provided by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs catering mainly for recently-arrived migrants.

The programme Grant is designed to fund projects which it is envisaged will develop strategies and proposals for better access to general services by migrants. In this way they may be seen as "Pilot Demonstration Projects."

We have identified a need for an adult literacy and english language and speaking programme for migrants who have been in Australia for over five years and have not had the opportunity to attend english classes.
If the results of this "Demonstration Project" confirm a need for an on-going programme, relevant Government funding bodies will be approached for information on how best to accommodate these needs on on-going basis.

We are looking at the revival of the "Home Tutor Scheme", and the Home Correspondence course being made available for long-term migrants. The current Adult Literacy programmes favour migrants who have had at least five years' participation in formal learning of the english language.

The present system of the five-year duration scheme for the teaching of migrant english also favours a small section of the community - Filipino women, for example, who have had the opportunity to learn english before migrating. More advanced english as a second language is available through T.A.F.E. College.

A number of immigrants intending to take advantage of Mount Isa Mines' early retirement at 55 years, are looking at investing their savings and superannuation funds in small-business ventures. Lack of investment knowledge through lack of english language and literacy skills is severely restricting their enquiries in their attempts to become financially dependant in their retirement years.

The new "Health and Safety Act" with it's stricter safety regulations, requiring employees to undergo written tests to prove their understanding of the Act, has severely restricted migrants with difficulty in written english, in gaining promotion in their area of work.

Long-term immigrants and refugees who did not have the opportunity of schooling in english language programmes during the early post war periods of their migration to Australia, especially those who chose to settle in isolated country areas such as Mount Isa, are in great need of tutoring.

PRIVATE LANGUAGE CLASSES FOR MIGRANTS IN MOUNT ISA

Language classes are available at some State and Private schools, with the aid of volunteers. The classes are more a "fun learning" programme, where culture is taught as well.

Private Children's German language and culture classes have been in operation for almost three years, with about sixty children from kindergarten level to upper primary. Officials of Mount Isa Mines are so impressed with the results of this programme, that they are sponsoring the "unqualified" teacher to travel to Germany to further her language, singing and teaching skills for the future.

The proposed Japanese language programme to be introduced into State Upper Primary Schools in Mount Isa is a welcome start to language studies at primary level. I personally feel that upper Primary age level is too late. Children need to learn a language from kindergarten level, or at least first year primary, so that they grow up feeling comfortable with another language and culture during their most formative years.

T.A.F.E. College runs classes from time to time whenever a suitable teacher is available. Japanese and German classes are currently available.

Mount Isa is fairly well catered for in the way of Government assistance

Areas of assistance needed to benefit migrants in Mount Isa

* Adult Migrant Education funded programme - english language and literacy skills programme for long-term immigrants.
* Foreign culture and language programme in State Primary Schools for lower grade students.
* Funding availability for:- School Liason Officer for Primary and High school level - a person who has empathy and understanding of the ethnic community.
* Marriage Guidance Councellor.
* Reintroduction of the english language Home Tutor Scheme, with financial assistance in the training of tutors, and with availability of support literature, videos and tapes.
* Access to arrival dates of migrants in Mount Isa and district for Migrant Welcome representatives.
* Family Law Court hearings in Mount Isa on a regular basis. Travelling to Townsville is very costly for wives who have been left without any means of support.